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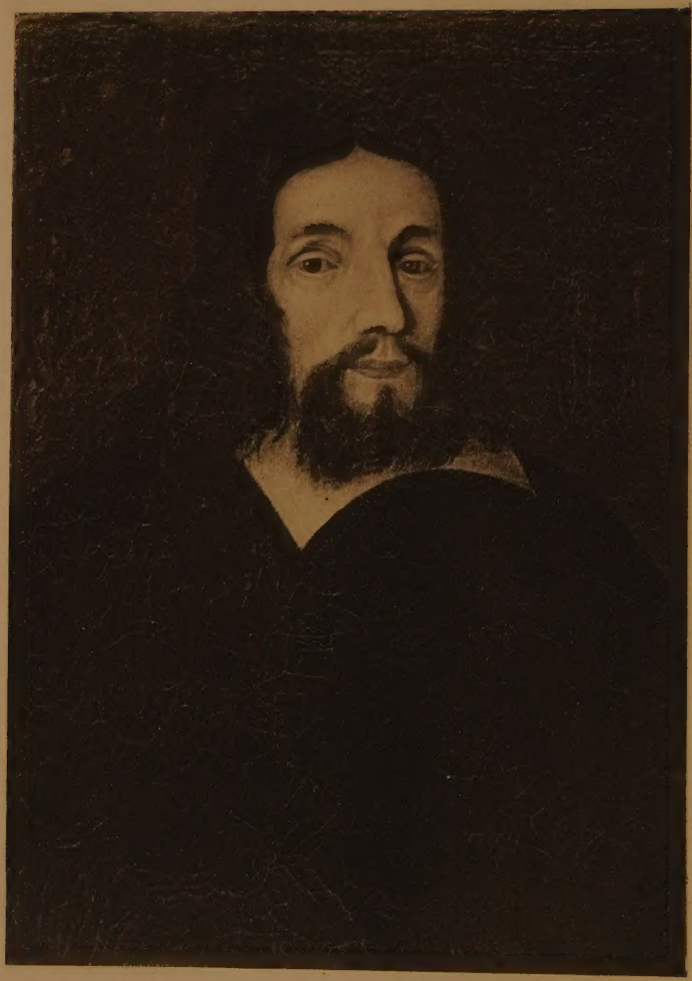
# THE LIFE & TIMES
OF
# MASTER JOHN HUS



*John Hus.*
*From the Herrnhut Archives.*

# THE LIFE & TIMES

OF

# MASTER JOHN HUS

BY

THE COUNT LÜTZOW

*Hon. D.Litt. Oxon., Hon. Ph.D. Prag., Author of A History of Bohemian Literature, Prague, etc.*

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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# PREFACE

It is hardly necessary to state that it is not without diffidence that I attempt to give an account of the life and times of John Hus. So much has been written on the great subject of the Bohemian reformation, and yet so little that is satisfactory. Hus has often been described as a martyr and as a forerunner of the German reformation, and both statements are to a certain extent true. It has equally often been attempted to blacken the memory of Hus, frequently by the most unworthy means. I write as a fervent admirer of Hus, both as an enthusiastic Bohemian patriot and as a fervent and pious Christian, whose life-purpose was to strive for a return to the conditions of the apostolic church, and to rescue the Church of Rome from the state of unspeakable corruption into which it had then fallen; and from which, partly by the action of Hus, it has since been delivered. It is no part of my task to attempt to prove that Hus was perfect. No man, indeed, would have resented such an attempt more than he, who in his writings constantly refers in a childlike and touching manner to his—very insignificant—shortcomings.

The very fact that my sympathy is entirely with Hus has, I hope, been to me an inducement to sift carefully all reliable evidence that may be contrary to him, and to study diligently the writings of all those who have written unfavourably of Hus. This impartiality appears to me as a duty for those who attempt, as historians, to pass judgment on the great men of bygone days. Not one of these great men has been judged

more differently than Hus; and recent German historians have with great ingenuity attempted to classify the writers who have dealt with the life of the greatest man who belonged to the Czech or Bohemian race. It is sufficient to note here that these writers are either favourable to the Church of Rome and therefore, though often with great limitations, hostile to Hus, or opponents of Rome, who revere in him one of the earliest champions of religious liberty and one of the forerunners of the German reformers. This division may appear obvious, but it is far less absolute than might be imagined. Thus Romanist writers who belong to the Czech or Bohemian nationality have often written somewhat favourably of Hus. Though condemning those of his views—far less numerous than has often been thought—which are opposed to Rome, these writers have done thorough justice to the beauty of his truly saintly character, and they have admitted that it was the virtuous indignation caused in him by the immoral life led by many—and principally the higher—ecclesiastics of the Roman Church that induced him to denounce that church in very strong terms.

On the other hand, Protestant German writers have, principally within the last years, violently attacked the memory of Hus. They saw in him mainly the undaunted champion of the oppressed Czech or Bohemian nationality. It was found easier in Germany to render justice to Hus at a time when the national cause for which he struggled so manfully appeared to be doomed, than it is now, when the Bohemian language, which owes so much to Hus, has attained a development that was undreamt of a century ago. Incidentally, and no doubt unintentionally, these German writers have done great service to the fame of Hus by drawing attention to the great part

which he played as a Bohemian patriot. It was the word of Hus, as well as the sword of Zizka, which preserved the autonomy and the national character of Bohemia, which at the period of the Hussite wars were seriously menaced by the numerous German colonists whom the policy of the Premyslide princes had established in the Bohemian towns. It will, of course, be my duty to point out the great part that Hus played as a Bohemian patriot. He believed as firmly as the Bohemian patriots of the present day that the nation as an individuality stands and falls with its language. Hus devoted much time and care to the development of that language, and a little-known part of his activity also consisted in his endeavour to introduce into the churches the singing by laymen of hymns in the national language.

The fact that the movement in favour of church-reform, which had in England found expression in the writings of Wycliffe, found in Bohemia a particularly fruitful soil, was a consequence of the condition and past history of the country. Bohemia had first received the Christian teaching from Greek monks of Salonika, and even after it began to form part of the Western Church, Roman institutions penetrated into the country gradually and slowly. Thus the celibacy of the clergy was introduced into Bohemia later than into most countries, and it seems probable—though this is a most controversial matter—that communion in the two kinds continued to be customary there up to a late period, perhaps up to the beginning of the fifteenth century. It also requires mention that, in consequence of its geographical position, Bohemia for a long time suffered less from the extortions of the Roman pontiffs than many other countries. Only when, in consequence of the schism, the rival popes found that the number

of countries from which they could derive funds was diminishing, the claims of Rome on Bohemia became more urgent and more frequent. The discontent caused by the rapacity of the rival pontiffs, whose violent controversies did not raise the Western Church in the esteem of the Bohemian people, found a centre in the University of Prague. Under the influence of this university, a school of theologians sprung up who are known as the forerunners of Hus. These writers long remained almost unknown, and it is only since the revival of Bohemian literature in the nineteenth century that their works have again begun to attract attention. Even now much work has to be done and many MSS. remain unprinted; still it can already be stated that recent research has thrown much new light on Hus and the Hussite movement. I have in this work endeavoured to give a *resumé* of the studies of modern Bohemian writers on this movement. These works, mostly written in the national language, have by no means received hitherto the attention which they well deserve.

It may be here stated that these writings prove clearly the existence in Bohemia of a strong national movement in favour of church-reform, which depended by no means entirely on foreign influences. As Dr. Kybal recently wrote in his valuable work on Matthew of Janov, the greatest of the forerunners of Hus: "The view that Hussitism is merely artificially fostered Wycliffism appears to me logically and historically as nonsense."[1] It would be invidious to attribute to racial antagonism the recent attempts of German writers to depreciate the importance of Hus. Yet it is certain that the German writers, who recently have extolled Wycliffe at the expense of Hus, have attributed to the English divine greater originality

[1] Dr. Kybal uses the English word "nonsense."

and greater depth of thought than is generally attributed to him by his countrymen.

I have under the heading " Bibliography " given a large though by no means complete list of the authorities which I have consulted, and specially drawn attention to the writings of the modern Bohemian historians, on whose labours this work is mainly based. I wish to express my particular thanks to Dean Müller of Herrnhut, who has kindly forwarded me a photograph of the portrait of Hus—reproduced here—which has been preserved by the community of Herrnhut.

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# THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MASTER JOHN HUS

## CHAPTER I

### EUROPE AND BOHEMIA AT THE TIME OF HUS

HOSTILITY to the Church of Rome is almost as ancient as the prosperity of that church. The fabled "donation of Constantine," the subject of the lamentations of Dante and so many other mediæval writers, certainly denotes a landmark in the history of the church. The suffering early church has, in the Christian martyrs, given to humanity some of its noblest types, and the comparison of Hus to these sufferers frequently recurs in the writings of the Bohemians. When Constantine granted to the church, not indeed sovereign power, but great authority and riches, a very sudden change took place. The contrast between the martyrs of the year 313 and the wealthy and worldly prelates who, under imperial presidency, discussed matters of dogma at Nicæa in 325 is very great. Henceforth the power and influence of the church constantly increase and the conception of the priest as an individual who, by virtue of his office, is superior to the layman, becomes more and more widely spread. As in many cases the life of the layman was simpler, more moral, more virtuous than that of the priest, this assumption caused great animosity against the clergy. Claims such as that of receiving communion more frequently, and of partaking of the sacrament in the two kinds—a favour not granted to laymen—were constantly brought forward by the priests, particularly in Bohemia. These pretentions, indeed, played a very great part in the Bohemian movement for church-reform, for the Bohemians considered them as

indicating an ever-increasing endeavour on the part of the priests to raise new barriers between themselves and those who were not in holy orders. Thence sprang the fervent devotion of the Bohemians to the chalice which has surprised many writers, and has exposed the Bohemians to the ridicule of both ultramontanes and agnostics ever since the days of Hus. To the Hussites the chalice was an emblem signifying the equality of all true Christians.

The ideal object of all mediæval opponents of the Church of Rome was a return to the simplicity of the primitive church, and the poverty of the clergy which that return was considered to imply. All those who, in mediæval times, wished to rescue the church from the evil plight into which it had fallen—whether they remained in the Church of Rome or were excluded from it—felt and expressed profound veneration for poverty. As Cardinal Newman writes:[1] "It will not be denied that, according to the Scripture view of the church, though all are admitted into her pale, and the rich inclusively, yet the poor are her members with a peculiar suitableness and by a special right. Scripture is ever casting slurs upon wealth and making much of poverty."

It has often been noted that, during the long struggle between the popes and the rulers of Germany, known as the contest about investitures, the German emperors very rarely appealed to the popular feeling in their contest with the Roman pontiffs. We find, of course, an exception in the case of Frederick II., who, after his deposition by Pope Innocent IV. at the Council of Lyons in 1245, appealed to the sovereigns of Europe against the pontiff.[2] This case is, however, an isolated one, and though the victory of the papacy over Germany cannot be

[1] Cardinal Newman, *Historical Sketches*, vol. i. p. 341, ed. of 1894.

[2] In the course of this letter the emperor writes: "Semper fuit nostrae voluntatis intentio clericos cujusumque ordinis ad hoc inducere, et praecipue *ad illum statum reducere* ut tales persevereut in fine *quales fuerunt in ecclesia primitiva apostolicam vitam ducentes* et humilitatem *dominicam imitantes*. (Huillard Bréholles, *Historia diplomatica Frederici Secundi*, quoted by Lechler.)

considered a complete one, the tendency to increase the authority and powers of the pope and of the upper ranks of the Roman hierarchy at the expense of the parish-priests and laymen continued, with brief interruptions, up to the time of Hus. The Hussite movement, indeed, can be considered as the first serious obstacle which confronted the extreme autocratic tendencies of Rome. As has been often pointed out, these tendencies were greatly aided by the development of the study of canonic law. These codes, founded on the writings of the jurists of imperial Rome, who maintained the absolute and unlimited power of the sovereign, strongly favoured the claims of the popes to a similar unrestricted authority. The excessive study of canonic law to the detriment of the study of the Bible greatly displeased those who wished the church to be poor and pure. One of the earliest Bohemian reformers, Matthew of Janov, has expressed himself strongly on this subject.[1]

In close connection with the papal claim of unrestricted authority was the question of the validity of the sacraments when dispensed by unworthy priests. It is difficult to overrate the importance of this question; for if it was admitted that immoral or dishonest priests could not validly administer the sacraments, the whole system of the papal hierarchy ceased to be sustainable. The popular mind was far more agitated by questions such as these than by the subtleties of dogmatic controversy on which later writers have laid so great a stress.

As already mentioned, the rulers of Germany had, during their prolonged struggle with papacy, entirely confined themselves to endeavours to limit the influence of the popes on the politics of Germany. If we except the belated attempt of

[1] He writes: "Magis nunc sunt in precio doctrine et studium eorum que vulgo jura canonica dicuntur quam studium biblie, prophetarum et evangeliorum et multo pinquiores transferunt ad studendum jura et leges quam sanctam theologiam et studentes talium legum et doctrinarum humanarum magis et cicius promoventur quam scribe et docti in lege Jesu Christi et theologia." (Mattheas de Janov, *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti.* I have preserved the spelling as printed by Dr. Kybal from the MS.)

Frederick II., nothing was done to arrest the development of the Roman hierarchy in an ever-increasingly absolutist sense. The German rulers also made but slight attempts to enlist to their side the popular feeling then strongly opposed to the Roman hierarchy, many of whose members were believed by the people to be haughty, avaricious, and devoid of all morality.

In the subsequent struggle between the papacy and the kings of France, matters were different. Writers such as John of Paris and Egydius Colonna, Archbishop of Bourges, strongly opposed the papal claims, and the latter went so far as to deny to the pontiff all right to temporal power.[1] In this struggle the kings of France were victorious, and it was one of the results of their victory that the papal court was transferred to Avignon, a city in the immediate vicinity of the French territory, and which was under the rule of a relation of the King of France. During this struggle between papacy and the rulers of France, the University of Paris played a very great part, and it became for a time the central authority in France on questions of theology; its position was somewhat similar to that of the University of Prague at the beginning of the Hussite wars. The University of Paris thus acquired great fame and students flocked to it from all parts of Europe. Among them was Matthew of Janov, one of the earliest Bohemian church-reformers, whose name will be frequently met in these pages.

The successful struggle of France against papacy was no doubt one of the causes of the energetic resistance offered to Rome by Louis of Bavaria, King of the Germans. A man of moderate intelligence, he entirely overlooked the immense difference between the position of a ruler of Germany, where

[1] Egydius writes: "Tertio declarandum est quod Christus in institutione spiritualis potestatis nullum commisit vel potius promisit Dominium terrenorum. . . . Ecce Christus Jesus, Rex Regum Dominus dominantium regale fugit dominium et fastuosum fastigium. Iqitur qua ratione vel autoritate vicarius ejus vindicabit sibi culmen vel nomen Regiae dignitatis?" (Goldast., *Monarchia Imperii Romani*, tom. ii. p. 95 and ff.)

the local potentates were ever increasing their power, and that of a king of France—a country in which even then a contrary, that is to say, a centralist tendency, began to appear. As had been the case in France, in Germany also, the sovereign found able literary men who devoted much talent and erudition to the defence of Louis of Bavaria. Such men were Marsiglio of Padua, John of Jandun, William of Occam, and others.[1] If, on the whole, Louis's struggle with papacy may be considered as having been unsuccessful, this cannot be entirely attributed to his incompetence, but to a certain extent also to the extreme vehemence of his literary allies, which alienated many moderate-minded men. These were fully aware of the necessity for church-reform—no right-minded man at that time could fail to perceive it—but they objected to the revolutionary character of some of the writings of Louis's allies. This applies particularly to Marsiglio of Padua's *Defensor Pacis*. In this strange work almost all the subsequent attacks on papacy are foreshadowed, and it has, as Neander has written, already what may be called a " Protestant " character. The *Defensor* is one of the most important works that belong to the Middle Ages. It contains the germ not only of Protestantism, but also of all those liberal and democratic views that only attained their full development centuries later. I shall here, however, as far as the necessary coherence of my work permits, limit myself to outlining that part of Marsiglio's work in which he expresses opinions similar to those of Hus and the other Bohemian reformers. Marsiglio of Padua, born in the city of that name about the year 1270, studied for a considerable time at the University of Paris and was, in 1312, rector of that university. It is stated that in Paris he fell under the influence of William of Occam. They were men of about the same age, but it is probable—though the dates of the works of both writers are uncertain—that Occam expressed disagreement with the papal

[1] The best account of the lives and writings of these men is still that given by Dr. Riezler in his brilliant work, *Die Literarischen Widersacher der Päpste.*

rule at an earlier period than Marsiglio. The latter appears also at this period already to have made the acquaintance of several Italian and German scholars—mostly monks belonging to the order of the minorites—who afterwards became his allies when he undertook to defend the cause of King Louis against papal agression. Marsiglio, whose views were on most subjects entirely opposed to those then generally accepted by the Roman Church, appears to have at this period already incurred the suspicion of heresy. It was at Paris that, in conjunction with his colleague, John of Jandun, he composed his masterpiece, the *Defensor Pacis*. It was reported that the two scholars had written the book in the space of two months. To all those who have even a superficial acquaintance with the *Defensor* this can only mean that it was during that time that they gathered together and shaped into a unity the results of many years of study. With this newly-written book as an introduction, Marsiglio and Jandun proceeded to the court of King Louis, who was then residing at Nürnberg.

As Dr. Riezler has written, the *Defensor* is one "of those books that have been more praised than read." The reason is not far to seek. The constant repetitions, the incessant minute definitions, and all the armoury of mediæval scholasticism render the book most difficult and tedious to read. The mediævalism of the form of the book is the more striking when we note how very modern are the ideas which it contains. After referring to the necessity of peace in the world, a wish from which Marsiglio derived the name of his book, the author first gives a definition of the state, founded on Aristotle, in accordance with whom he also enumerates the different forms of government. Every state should be governed by laws, and all citizens, with the exception of foreigners, bondsmen, and women, should act as legislators. The prince, being human, cannot be considered as being infallible, and he should therefore be controlled in his actions by the legislators. In the last—nineteenth—chapter of the first part, Marsiglio raises the

question why this system, which would ensure peace, cannot be carried out. The answer is: Because of the extreme power which, since the donation of Constantine, the church has acquired, and because of the interference of the clergy in temporal matters. This leads to the second part, which is far more important for the study of Hus, whose ideas Marsiglio here frequently anticipates. In this part the author deals with papacy, priesthood, and their relations to the temporal power. Marsiglio begins by defining the conception " church " (*ecclesia*), which according to him can be described as being the community of all who believe in Christ, be they priests or laymen. The following chapters deal with the authority of the pope to act as judge and ruler. By means of a vast array of biblical passages quoted in the manner usual in the scholastic school, the writer endeavours to prove that the pope has no legislative or punitive power over laymen, or even over priests, except so far and so long as it is granted to him by the temporal authorities. In chapter seven, Marsiglio proceeds to dispute the papal right to excommunicate temporal sovereigns or officials—a power that the popes had during their prolonged struggles with the German and French sovereigns frequently misused. The right of excommunication, according to Marsiglio, belongs only to the whole Christian community or to a general council representing it. Marsiglio then expresses disapproval of the exemption of the clergy from temporal jurisdiction, a rule that then and for many years afterwards was universally accepted. He next denies the power of the popes to inflict temporal punishment on heretics. Such men, he writes, should be punished by the civil power, but only if their conduct is also in opposition to civil law. After these deductions—of which I have here only given a brief outline—limiting in many respects the then generally admitted powers of Rome, Marsiglio devotes the following chapters to a definition of apostolic poverty. Like all antagonists of papacy, he lays great stress on this point, which, in consequence of the luxury,

immorality, and avarice of the clergy of that time, was always before the mind of all thoughtful men. Christ, Marsiglio writes, did not sanction this pride and avarice; He, though it was in His power to appear in the world as a great king, yet preferred poverty. Marsiglio then studies the constitution of the church; like many other church-reformers he declares that the distinction between bishops and priests (*presbyteros*) does not go back to the time of Christ, but was established far later.[1] In chapter seventeen, which treats of the "authority by whom bishops and other priests and servants of the church should be appointed," Marsiglio declares that Christ alone is the Head of the church.[2] The apostles were consecrated by Christ Himself, and the apostles ordained their immediate successors. Afterwards the priests were chosen by the community of the faithful, or by persons delegated by them. The writer then maintains the unity of the church, which can have but one creed founded exclusively on the teaching of Scripture. Scripture undoubtedly requires interpretation, and we cannot accept any other interpreter than a universal council inspired by the Holy Ghost. No such authority can be claimed by the popes, who have frequently erred and even fallen under the suspicion of heresy. Marsiglio then again refers to the gradual development of the papal primacy. Beginning, as was customary, with the donation of Constantine, he notes how the power of the Roman bishops, and with it the self-assertion of the pontiffs in their relations to temporal rulers, continued uninterruptedly to increase. After strongly insisting on the depravation of the papal court and of the higher ecclesiastics,

[1] Compare Hus, *De Ecclesia*, chapter xv.: "Tunc autem non ordinaverat (Deus) nisi Diaconos et Presbyteros, tunc etiam idem presbyter erat et episcopus, ut ait Hieronymus ut et patet ex texto Apostoli. . . ."

[2] The passage is so important that it may be given in Marsiglio's own words: "Expedit narrare primum institutionis et determinationis episcoporum seu presbyterorum modum circa statum et initium ecclesiae primitivae unde cetera postmodum derivata sunt. Horum autem omnium principium accipiendum est a Christo qui caput est et petra super quam fundata est ecclesia catholica secundum quod dixit Apostolus ad Ephesios." (*Defensor Pacis*, ii. chap. xvii.)

who despised theological studies while they cherished the legists who were, through their knowledge of canonic law, able to support the unjustified claims of the priesthood, Marsiglio proceeds to discuss the conflict then raging between papacy and his patron, King Louis. It is difficult to overrate the historical importance of the *Defensor Pacis*. Many subsequent church-reformers have, perhaps unknowingly, borrowed from him; for the ideas contained in the *Defensor* seem to have been so generally shared by the thinkers of the time that they had almost become common property. As regards Hus, Dr. Lenz has, writing on the treatise *De Ecclesia* of Hus, declared—rightly from his standpoint as a Roman Catholic priest—that many statements contained in the treatise *De Ecclesia* had already been declared heretical when Pope John XXII., in 1327, decreed that the *Defensor Pacis* was a work "false, heretical, and contrary to Scripture." [1]

The writings of William of Occam also express views on the government of the church and the power of the pope which anticipate those of Wycliffe and Hus. Occam's work was written during the pontificate of John XXII., who, mainly from political motives, and through the influence of France, waged a bitter and prolonged war against Germany. Though himself accused, not entirely without foundation, of professing heretical views,[2] John XXII. expanded the pretensions of the papal see in a manner that none of his predecessors had attempted. Occam writes as a strong defender of the authority of temporal rulers. The pope, he declares, has no right to secular authority. Christ neither exercised nor claimed such a power.[3]

[1] Prof. Dr. Lenz, *Uaeni Mistra Jana Husi* (The Teaching of John Hus), p. 48.

[2] It is beyond the purpose of this work to enter into this matter. Pope John XXII. was accused of having said that it was only after the day of judgment that the chosen enter heaven.

[3] "Papa non est magis exemptus a jurisdictione imperatoris, quam fuit Christus, sed Christus in quantum homo mortalis subjectus fuit jurisdictioni imperatoris, ergo et Papa modo simili, et par consequens imperator est judex ordinarius Domini Papae." ("Ockam Dialogus," p. 50, in Goldastus, *Monarchia Imperii Romani*, vol. ii.)

This brief note on the state of Europe about the time of the birth of Hus is in many respects applicable to Bohemia. Yet the geographical and ethnographical position of the country and its history placed Bohemia in a position that was somewhat different from that of Western Europe. The country first received Christianity from the East, and though it afterwards acknowledged the rule of Rome—forming at first part of the archdiocese of Maintz in Germany, and being since the time of Charles IV. under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Prague—yet it is certain that many of the rites and regulations of Rome were accepted in Bohemia later than in most European countries. Celibacy of the clergy became general at a late period and very gradually. Communion in the two kinds continued to be customary up to the fourteenth century, though the learned work of the gifted Professor Kalousek has proved [1] that it had probably died out before the time of Hus. The Bohemian exile, Paul Stranský, writing in the seventeenth century, states that the Eastern Church continued to have adherents among humbler men in Bohemia even after Romanism had been generally accepted. If we consider the great tenacity of the Bohemian people, which has so often been blamed by its enemies and praised by its friends, it does not appear improbable that this may have been the case, at least for a considerable period. Thus when the terrible persecution of all opponents of Rome that began in Bohemia in 1620 was ended by the " Toleranz Patent " of the Emperor Joseph II. in 1781, it was ascertained that in outlying parts of the country many peasants had, during this long period, continued to hold religious services according to the Hussite rites.

It is at any rate certain that, during the latter part of the nineteenth century, many prominent Russian scholars such as Novikov, Helferding, Vasiljew, and Palmov have, following the example of Stranský, maintained that the connection of

[1] *O Historii Kalicha v. dobach predhusitskych* (The history of the chalice in the period anterior to Hus).

Bohemia with the Eastern Church was of more importance and longer duration than had formerly been supposed.[1] Some of these writers have even maintained that the Hussite movement itself was an attempt of the Bohemian people to return to the church from which it had first received Christianity. This supposition is entirely unfounded. It can be stated positively that we find in Hus no trace of the influence of the Eastern Church, though we cannot affirm this with the same certainty with regard to Jerome of Prague. It is a proof of the close connection between political and ecclesiastical matters that exists up to the present day in Austria, Bohemia, and Eastern Europe, that the question of the connection of Bohemia with the Eastern Church acquired a certain political importance during the period (1866–1872) when Russian opinion, and to a far lesser extent Russian diplomacy, supported the Bohemians in their struggle against the centralist policy of Vienna.

At the time when Bohemia first became part of the domain of the Western Church, it appears to have preserved a far greater degree of independence than did countries lying farther west. Immediately after the acceptation of the Roman rites the country was under the rule of the German Bishop of Regensburg; but when in 973 the bishopric of Prague was founded, it was but loosely connected with Rome. Its administrators were, on the other hand, greatly dependent on the rulers of Bohemia who considered them as their chaplains.[2] For several centuries after the foundation of the bishopric of

[1] Paul Stransky writes: "Nobilitas praecipue et plerique omnes qui cum Germanis vicinis frequentiores esse, commerciaque habere consuerant a ritibus Graecis recesserunt. Tenuiores duntaxat et plebs rebus domi praesentibus contenta Graeci ritus sacra tenaciter servabat." (*Respublica Bojema*, p. 271.)

[2] As late as 1182, when the Bishop of Prague attempted to appeal to the German Emperor against a decree of Duke Frederick of Bohemia, the latter "fertur respondisse per procuratorem suum: Cum sit omnibus notum Pragensem episcopum meum fore capellanum, sicut omnes praedecessores sui patrum et avorum meorum fuerunt capellani, discernite quaeso si liceat ei agere contra dominum suum, vel si tenear ex aequo respondere capellano meo." (*Chronicle of Jarloch Fontes Rerum Bohemicarum*, ii. p. 480.)

Prague, the influence of the papal see on the lands of the Bohemian crown [1] was very insignificant. The supremacy of Rome, indeed, only finds expression in the fact that the popes confirmed the most important decrees of the Bohemian sovereigns which referred to ecclesiastical matters.[2] This state of semi-independence in the course of time became displeasing to the rulers of the Western church. On several occasions papal legates appeared in Bohemia, who endeavoured to bring the Bohemian Church into closer subjection to Rome. They, however, encountered the hostility both of the sovereigns and of the people of Bohemia, and when, during the long contest about investitures, the rulers of Bohemia sided with the German emperors, all relations between Rome and Bohemia ceased for a considerable time.

The beginning of the thirteenth century is noteworthy as being the moment when a great change took place. Henceforth the power of the Roman Church incessantly increases. In Bohemia, as elsewhere, that church endeavoured to introduce obligatory celibacy among the clergy, and this demand appeared particularly arbitrary to the Bohemians who had first received Christianity from the Eastern Church. Their priests had hitherto almost all been married men, who were attached by family ties to the other members of the community. Thus Cosmas the chronicler,[3] the earliest of Bohemian historians, though a canon of Prague, dedicated his great historical work to the memory of his wife, Bozetecha. In Bohemia, as elsewhere, it became part of the papal policy to establish — by enforcing the celibacy of the clergy—a caste apart from the

[1] The lands of the Bohemian crown are Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, though Lusatia was for a time also considered a land of the Bohemian crown.

[2] The interesting question of the relations of the Bohemian Church to Rome in the pre-Hussite period was formerly very obscure. Recently (1904 and 1906) Dr. Krofta has in the *Cesky Casopis Historicky* (*Bohemian Historical Review*) published a valuable series of articles on this subject. I have here largely used these studies.

[3] For Cosmas, see my *History of Bohemian Literature*, pp. 42-46, and particularly *Lectures on the Historians of Bohemia*, pp. 6-14.

laity, and subject only to the will of Rome. These attempts met with strong opposition on the part of the Bohemian priests. Thus we read [1] that in 1197 the papal legate, Peter of Capua, who demanded that those who were to be ordained should take the vow of chastity, was nearly killed by the indignant priests. In the course of the thirteenth century, however, celibacy gradually became general among the Bohemian clergy.

Henceforth it may be also stated that the Roman pontiffs interfered more frequently in the internal organisation of the Bohemian Church. "Letters of immunity," which released monasteries from the jurisdiction of the bishops, are very often met with, and they greatly strengthened the Roman influence in the country. Gradually and cautiously the popes also introduced into Bohemia the practice of granting "provisions" on bishoprics and abbeys, thus rendering illusory the right of the chapters to elect the bishops and abbots. These "provisions" became very frequent during the rule of the avaricious Pope John XXII., and still more so during that of Clement VI., who appointed two of his nephews, William and Nicholas Roget, to canonries at the Cathedral of Prague. As Dr. Krofta writes in his study, to which I have already referred, the Cathedral of Prague was so charged with papal "provisions" that it had become almost impossible to obtain a benefice there except by virtue of such a provision. The discontent which such an abuse naturally caused was aggravated by the fact that its profits fell almost exclusively into the hands of foreigners—friends either of the papal see or of the Bohemian court. That court at a period when the Bohemian kings were often German or Roman emperors frequently had an anti-national character. Of the native priests, also, generally those

[1] "Anno Dominicae Incarnationis MCXCVII dominus Petrus diaconus cardinalis ad Sanctam Mariam a Via Lata venit in Bohemiam . . . et ordines clericorum per manum domini Engelberti Olomucensis episcopi fieri precepit. In quibus ipse cardinalis a sacerdotibus plebanis ob votum castitatis quod ab ordinandis exigebatur versis in seditionem fere fuerat occisus." (*Chronicle of Jarloch Fontes Rerum Bohemicarum*, ii. p. 512.)

who were supported by Rome or the Bohemian court succeeded in obtaining benefices.

Of the Bohemian clergy as constituted in accordance with this new system it is impossible to speak otherwise than in terms of the severest reprobation. It was a general complaint that the priests neglected the duties of their office; many, indeed, entirely absented themselves, though they continued to draw the revenues of their benefices. Almost all the priests were accused of avarice and simony—an offence that had become so general that Hus devoted to it one of his best-known treatises. The pious Ernest of Pardubice, first Archbishop of Prague, was obliged to complain in one of his provincial statutes that many priests refused to celebrate burial and marriage services, to hear confessions, to administer the sacraments of communion and extreme unction, and indeed to perform any ecclesiastical functions except on payment of money. The regulations certainly forbade such payments, and declared that the penalty was to be deprivation of the benefice should the priest himself commit the offence, or imprisonment if the culprit was the vicar, or any other person acting for the priest. The enactments of the pious archbishop unfortunately proved ineffectual, and the abuses mentioned above continued and even increased up to the time of Hus. Ineffectual also were the repeated enactments which forbade priests to frequent taverns, to hunt, to wear laymen's clothes, and to carry arms. The gravest and most serious grievance, however, and the one to which Hus and his forerunners constantly refer, was the appalling immorality of the clergy. The Latin reports on the archdeaconal inspection held in Prague, in 1379 and 1380, present a most repulsive picture. It is stated that of the thirty-two parish priests of Prague sixteen were notorious because of their evil life, and much evidence of a most shocking character was produced by other priests and by inhabitants of the streets adjoining the parsonages.[1] This inspection did not include the higher

[1] Though it is by no means pleasant to deal with these accusations, founded

dignitaries of the church, but we find numerous and unfavourable reports on their conduct in contemporary records.[1] A large number of these dignitaries lived in open concubinage. Thus we read that Stephen, canon of Prague, chief writer of Bohemia, had several sons whom he openly recognised. One of these, "John, son of master Stephen, chief writer of the kingdom of Bohemia," was, under this designation, entered in the register of the University of Prague. The canon of Vysehrad, John Pecnik, a teacher (*scholasticus*), had several daughters whom he recognised, and one of whom he married to a tailor. These cases seem to differ somewhat from those mentioned previously, and it is difficult not to believe that the celibacy of the clergy was in the pre-Hussite period less firmly established in Bohemia than most writers have stated. It is certain that after the death of Hus the marriages of priests immediately became general and met with little or no opposition. Unfortunately, cases of gross and coarse immorality were also frequent among the dignitaries of the Bohemian Church. Thus the rector of the Church of St. John the Evangelist at Prague complained that in the house of John of Landstein, provost of Melnik, "the porter and portress gave shelter to disorderly women, for the provost and his brothers,

though they are on official statements of the ecclesiastical authorities, it is necessary to allude to them, as the intense hatred and contempt of the Roman priests, which was general among the Bohemians of the time of Hus, would otherwise appear inexplicable. Professor Tomek (in vol. iii. of his *Dejepis mesta Prahy*—History of the Town of Prague) has quoted largely from the report mentioned above. It should be stated that the late Professor Tomek was a strong conservative and a firm adherent of the Church of Rome. No one deserves less to be suspected of exaggeration. The report states (Tomek, iii. p. 242): "Item (Bartholomew, vicar of the Tyn church) dicit quod ipse interdum sed raro habet unam publicam meretricem per noctem, sed occulte et ipsam in crastino repellit." (*Ibid.* p. 243), "Item dicit (Prokop, vicar of St. Leonard's church) quod plebanus S. Johannis in Vado est meretricator et fornicator publicus." (*Ibid.* p. 247), "Andreas presbyter vicarius Ecclesiae St. Stephen dicit quod monachi monasterii S. Mariae Carmelitae transeunt per scolas publice in civitate Pragensi volentes scire experimenta, et quod dicunt se esse medicos, et sic decipiunt mulieres, conjugatas et honestas ipsas impraegnando." I must refer the reader to Prof. Tomek's book for further details on the report of the archdeaconal inspection.

[1] Tomek, *History of the Town of Prague*, pp. 245-246.

Vitek and Litold, and that monks, married men, and people of all sorts were admitted there."

The impression produced on pious men by such conduct, which appeared to them not only as a sin and scandal but also as a sacrilege, cannot be exaggerated. Though the reading of Scripture was discouraged, the Bible was in the hands of many pious men. They felt certain that so sinful a world would perish shortly. Thence sprang the constant reference to the appearance of Antichrist, with which we meet not only in the writings of Hus, but also in those of his forerunners and successors.

There were thus many reasons why the general opposition to papacy caused by the schism and the coarse and even blasphemous polemics which accompanied it was stronger in Bohemia than elsewhere, and had in that country more permanent and more weighty results.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FORERUNNERS OF HUS

BEFORE referring to the writers and preachers whom almost all historians, both Catholic and Protestant, have described as the forerunners of Hus, it is necessary to notice a theory concerning the origin of Hussitism that has recently found great favour, particularly in Germany. The great rancour and disparagement with which recent German authors, both Protestant and Catholic, have written of Hus, is founded on the fact that a part, and a very important part, of his career has only recently become widely known. I allude to the fact that Hus was, during his whole life, a firm defender and leader of the Bohemians in their struggle for national independence, and therefore a consistent opponent of the Germans who, at the time of Hus, had obtained almost exclusive possession of all, and particularly of the ecclesiastical, offices in Bohemia. As the racial struggle rages in Bohemia at the present day with the same fury as it did five centuries ago, and as the evil habit of using the events of the past as examples and arguments applicable to the political events of the present is very prevalent there, Hus has been hated by many recent writers, not because he was a church-reformer, but because he was an ardent Bohemian patriot.

It has constantly been affirmed by the writers of this school that Hus was an uneducated peasant-priest, a national fanatic, a mere copier of the writings of Wycliffe. These views are maintained by many writers whose ephemeral works, intended for the purpose of flattering the vanity of the Germans, require no notice. But one of the most eminent German scholars of the present day, Professor Loserth, has also expressed similar

opinions, and they have not remained without echo in recent English works. In his important work, *Hus und Wiclif*, Professor Loserth has strongly insisted on the indebtedness of Hus to Wycliffe. He has undoubtedly proved this indebtedness, which has indeed at all times been known to those who have studied the writings both of Wycliffe and of Hus. Thus the treatise of Hus, *De Ecclesia*, is to a large extent founded on Wycliffe's work of the same name, and Professor Loserth has, in his work mentioned above, printed in parallel columns considerable passages from the two works that are almost identical. With all deference to so eminent a scholar as is Professor Loserth, it must be admitted that he has everywhere attempted to minimise the importance and independence of Hus and the Hussite movement. Thus Loserth—as did Höfler before him —lays great stress on the fact that the Hussites were frequently called Wycliffites by their enemies. He does not, however, mention that as the strength of the Bohemian movement in favour of church-reform was largely based on its connection with the national movement, it was an obvious stratagem of the Romanist party to exaggerate the dependence of the reform movement on foreign influences. We frequently meet with this tendency. Thus one of the manuscripts of a work of Matthew of Janov, one of the forerunners of Hus, formerly bore the inscription: *Tractatus Johannis Wikleff heretici*. This inscription was afterwards erased and the name of the true author, Matthew of Janov, substituted.[1] Professor Loserth has also placed Wycliffe on a higher pedestal than most of the English reformers' countrymen have done,[2] and he has certainly

[1] Dr. Kybal's edition of Janov's *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, vol. i. p. 1.

[2] It is interesting to compare with Loserth's appreciation the words of the late Canon Bigg, who writes: "Wycliffe was a college don, the most famous teacher of his time at Oxford, though not of the first rank. His philosophy is not original and he appeals invariably to the head; there is no sentiment or pathos or unction about him, not a grain of amusement is to be extracted from his books, and we may reckon this a serious defect—not a grain of poetry, and this is more serious still. He had none of the qualities of a great preacher, or a great leader of the people, and as far as we can see, he never attempted

greatly underrated the learning of Hus. The comparison between an enthusiast such as was Hus, impelled by fiery indignation to denounce the iniquities of the clergy of Bohemia and the oppression of his countrymen, and a learned, though somewhat arid scholar such as was Wycliffe, is indeed altogether meaningless. Hus believed that a thorough reform of the alien, immoral, and simoniac clergy of Bohemia was necessary; and there being no hope of obtaining the assent to such a reform from the corrupt popes of his time, he inevitably and, it may be added, reluctantly became an opponent of the Church of Rome. In the controversy which followed, Hus used as weapons many of the writings of divines anterior to his time. Among these writings the works of Wycliffe, often themselves founded on earlier theologians, occur very frequently. Often also Hus and Wycliffe have drawn from the same source. It is a great merit of Mr. Workman that he pointed out, in the introduction to his edition of the *Letters of Hus*, that the Bohemian reformer is indebted to Gratian's *Decretum* almost as greatly as to the writings of Wycliffe. Both Hus and Wycliffe also depend largely on the teaching of St. Augustine, and one of the principal theories of both church-reformers, which describes the church as the community of all who believe in Christ, laymen as well as priests, is derived from the *Defensor Pacis* of Marsiglio of Padua.

It may be stated generally that the extreme importance of verbal exactitude in scholastic definitions—where even the slightest deviation from the accepted wording might have exposed the writer to the suspicion of heresy—rendered it customary among the theologians of the Middle Ages to copy word by word the statements of previous writers. It was equally customary with the theologians of that time to incor-

to be either one or the other. (Canon Bigg, *Wayside Sketches in Ecclesiastical History*, p. 118). I may here mention that though I have given a short notice of the early French and German opposition to Rome, I have done nothing similar as regards England. The reason is very simple. Many English writers far more competent than I am have dealt with this subject.

porate in their works without acknowledgment long passages and even entire treatises contained in the books of previous writers. Thus Gerson without acknowledgment included in his works a considerable part of the *Declaratio compendiosa defectuum virorum ecclesiasticorum* of Henry of Langenstein.[1] Thus also Peter of Ailly incorporated a considerable portion of Occam's *Dialogus* in one of his early works without mentioning his source.[2] Many other similar cases could be mentioned.

The great authority of so eminent a scholar as Professor Loserth has induced other recent German writers, who possessed less learning though more racial hatred than he does, to vilify Hus and to exaggerate the importance attached to Wycliffe in Bohemia.[3] These writers have particularly laid great stress on the supposed ignorance of Hus. This supposition can already be considered as obsolete in consequence of the recent studies of Bohemian writers, particularly of that talented and enthusiastic scholar, Professor Flajshaus. The learned professor published recently an almost unknown work of Hus entitled *Super IV. Sententiarum*, a commentary on the sentences of Peter Lombard. The work, larger than any other book of Hus that is known, has great value and bears witness to the deep and extensive learning of the writer. In referring to this recent and important publication, Professor Loserth writes :[4] "It can now be considered as certain that the former opinion of the literary work of Hus will be changed in many respects, and that it will be esteemed more highly than before."

It has already been mentioned that the exaggeration of the undeniable influence of Wycliffe's writings on those of Hus

[1] Schwab., *Johannes Gerson*, p. 121.

[2] Tschackert, *Peter von Ailly*, p. 43.

[3] Professor Loserth is not himself free from this tendency. Thus, when referring to a passage of Hus's *De Ecclesia* in which the Bohemian reformer refers to Bishop Grosseteste, Loserth mentions that the Prague libraries possessed many MSS. of the writings of the Bishop of Lincoln, adding "that they were probably obtained because Wycliffe frequently mentioned him," a conjecture for which Loserth does not give a tittle of evidence. Grosseteste's writings were much read and studied quite independently of Wycliffe.

[4] *Mittheilungen des Instituts fur oesterreichische Geschitschreibung*, No. 26.

is no new matter. Hus himself frequently protested against the suggestion that he was responsible for all the statements made by Wycliffe, and shortly after the death of the Bohemian church-reformer a controversy on this subject arose. In a work attacking the extreme church-reformers or Taborites, John of Pribram, a Hussite divine who was probably a pupil of Janov, and who was an intimate friend of Hus wrote:[1] "It is well known to many that, when preaching, Master John Hus said that he would not defend any error of Wycliffe or of anyone else! He also preached: 'If Wycliffe is in heaven, may he pray to God for us; if he is in purgatory, may God help him; if he is in hell, the Lord be blessed.' Also in Constance before his death, he (Hus) said openly before all: 'Why do you blame me because of Wycliffe? What concern is it of mine? For neither was Wycliffe a Bohemian, nor was he my father; he was an Englishman; therefore, if he wrote errors, let the English answer for them.' And you can see by this speech that Master John Hus, as it were, rejected Wycliffe." In this passage, too long to quote in its entirety, Master Pribram energetically protests against the description of the Hussites as Wycliffites. It is obvious from the statement of Master John of Pribram that the attitude of Hus and the Hussites with respect to the teaching of Wycliffe was by no means one of inept and unreasoning assent as has been stated by some recent German writers. As recent Bohemian scholars have truly maintained, the question of the correlation of the teaching of Wycliffe and that of Hus cannot be decided at present. Besides examining what part of the writings of Hus is derived from the writings of Wycliffe, it would be necessary to examine also thoroughly what other sources Hus used, and also what were the principal sources of the teaching of Wycliffe, which was by no means original. It is however questionable whether

[1] In his *Zivot Knezi Toborskych* (Life of the priests of Tabor). The work is still unprinted. I quote from the extract published in the *Výbor z. Literatury ceske* (Selections from Bohemian Literature), part ii.

such a pedantic enterprise would be worth the great amount of research which it would require. No two men were more entirely different in all respects than were Wycliffe and Hus. Here, if ever, the time-worn saying that comparisons are odious may be considered as true.

It has been necessary to refer here to the influence of Wycliffe on Hus, as some writers have endeavoured to prove that the Bohemian movement in favour of church-reform was an artificial one imported from foreign countries, and that there was in Bohemia, at the end of the fourteenth century, no genuine national feeling opposed to the Church of Rome.

The reign of Charles I. of Bohemia—better known as the Emperor Charles IV.—raised Bohemia to a previously unknown degree of prosperity. The necessary consequence had been that the inhabitants of Bohemia, and particularly the citizens of Prague, had adopted a luxurious manner of life that had been quite unknown to their ancestors. The clergy greatly favoured by the king had acquired great riches, and, as mentioned previously, immorality, simony, and avarice prevailed among its members. Charles, a truly pious and enlightened Christian, by no means the bigot described by some historians, was deeply distressed by the state of the Bohemian clergy; and with the aid of his trusted councillor, Ernest of Pardubice, Archbishop of Prague, he endeavoured to stem the current of immorality and to bring about the much-needed reformation of the Bohemian clergy. But the deaths of the archbishop, in 1364, and of Charles himself, in 1378, put a stop to their good work. Though the king had reached the age of sixty-two, there is little doubt that his life was shortened by the apprehension that the evil life of the priesthood would finally cause a revolution, and by the beginning of the schism which took place shortly before his death, and with which he rightly thought that his son, Venceslas, would be unable to cope.

The Bohemian movement in favour of church-reform became in its later and better known period so entirely a national one

that it is interesting to note that the first prominent church-reformer in Bohemia was a German. It did not escape the vigilance of Charles, ever mindful of the welfare of his Bohemian subjects, that Prague was very deficient in able preachers. The fame of Conrad Waldhauser, an Augustine monk who was preacher at the court of the Austrian dukes at Vienna, reached Charles, and he determined to secure his services for the city of Prague. After having previously obtained the permission of the Archbishop of Prague, Conrad proceeded to that city in the year 1358; he had received holy orders fourteen years previously, and was then in the prime of life. He was appointed preacher at the Church of St. Giles, and to ensure his livelihood a parson's living at Litomerice (Leitmeritz) was also given to him. At that time—as at the present day—many of the more educated citizens of Prague were acquainted with the German language, and the eloquent sermons of Conrad produced a deep impression on the people. We read[1] that, during the first year of his activity, wondrous and sudden conversions took place. Thus Hanek, son of the rich merchant Jacob Bavorov, an alderman of the "old town,"[2] one of the most notorious gallants who, even in church, pursued women, disturbing their devotions, was suddenly converted. He now devoutly attended Conrad's sermons, and even obtained the friendship of the pious preacher. One of the most notorious usurers of Prague, after hearing the sermons of Conrad, returned to his victims all his ill-earned gains; and the women of Prague, struck by the Austrian monk's denunciations of luxury, discarded their fine clothing and jewellery, and adopted a plainer and more modest dress. Many Jews flocked to Conrad's sermons and were, by his orders, allowed to be present, though some of the citizens endeavoured to exclude them. The Church of St. Giles, where Conrad preached, though one of the largest in

[1] Tomek, *Dejepis mesta Prahy* (History of the Town of Prague), vol. iii.

[2] The community of Prague at this period consisted of three cities: the old town, the new town, and the "small quarter on the left bank of the Vltava (Moldan). See my *Prague*, Mediæval Town Series.

Prague, soon became too small for the audience, and he was often obliged to preach in the open air outside the church. The state of Prague became as that of a modern town during a revival meeting, and we here meet for the first time with one of those outbreaks of religious enthusiasm that are henceforth so frequent in the annals of Prague. Like so many other church reformers, Conrad soon came into conflict with the mendicant friars.[1] He had in his sermons vigorously attacked these friars, whose dishonesty, avarice, and immorality caused great scandal in Bohemia. They were, no doubt, particularly incensed against Conrad because he had—as they complained—admonished his congregation to give alms rather to the poor than to strong and well-fed monks.[2] The monks and nuns of the mendicant orders had been in the habit of demanding a sum of money from young boys and girls who wished to enter their orders. Informed of this practice, which he considered simonical according to canon law, Conrad complained to the Archbishop Ernest of Padrubice, who, however, declined to interfere, declaring that these orders, both male and female, were subject only to their own regulations. This fact witnesses to the difficulty that confronted even the best of bishops, if he attempted to remedy the evil customs of the church of that time. The mendicant friars were not long in seeking for vengeance. When, at the end of the year 1358, a French

[1] The animosity of the mendicant friars against all church reformers was great at this period. In a letter addressed to Conrad by Adalbert Ranco, one of the most learned Bohemians of the time and sometime rector of the University of Paris, known as a friend of Conrad, Milic, and Janov, he writes from Avignon: "Dicatis Milicio quod Parisiis publice dicitur et quasi super certa per mendicantes praedicatur quod ego sum simplex Armachanus (a reference to Richard Fitz Ralph, Archbishop of Armagh). *Casopis Musea Královstri Ceskeho* (Journal of the Bohemian Musem), 1880, p. 561.

[2] The mendicant friars declared: "Item dixit (Conrad): Vos non vultis dare pauperibus et datis monachis qui sunt fortes et qui plus habent quam habere debent. Nolite talibus fortibus dare quia modicum meritum ex hoc habebitis quia videlicet in quolibet collegio esset nec unus qui mereretur illud stipendium quod omnes devorant in guttura sua. (Höfler, *Geschichte der hussitischen Bewegung Böhmen*, vol. ii. pp. 17-50, contains previously unpublished documents concerning the conflicts of Conrad, Milic, Janov, and Ranco with the ecclesiastical authorities and with the mendicant friars.)

dominican arrived as papal legate in Prague, they immediately brought their complaints against Conrad before him. The preacher was summoned to appear before the legate, and he proceeded to the archiepiscopal court accompanied by several aldermen of the old town and the town-writer, Master Werner, who is described as a learned and worthy man. Archbishop Ernest was then at Vratislav (Breslau) at the court of King Charles, and the legate did not give audience to Conrad, but appointed several dominican monks who were to receive him. One of these monks engaged in a dispute with Werner, who told him that his master, the legate, had more wisdom in one foot than Master Werner in his whole body. Thus provoked, Werner answered, " You are all simonists, and your master also." In the absence of the legate no decision was taken, and the matter appears to have remained in abeyance. Ten days later, on December 28th, Conrad Waldhauser was again summoned to appear at the archiepiscopal court. Preaching early on that morning he, from the pulpit, begged the aldermen to appoint two of their number who were to accompany him. They readily consented, and Werner, the writer, also again joined them. Meanwhile, the rumour was circulated in the city that the monks were menacing Conrad, and a large crowd of men and women followed the venerated preacher, determined to protect him if necessary. When the crowd passed the dominican monastery of St. Clement, some of the monks appeared at the windows. They had to hear evil words, were told that they were heretics who deserved to be burnt, and the people spat out before them. Conrad and Master Werner endeavoured as far as possible to calm the people.[1] Of what befell at the archbishop's palace we have no certain information. It appears, however, that all parties agreed to leave matters in suspense till Archbishop Ernest should have returned to Prague. Early in 1359, the papal legate summoned Conrad to a disputation probably at the monastery of St. Clements.

[1] Tomek, *History of the Town of Prague*, vol. iii.

Waldhauser declined, stating that he was certain that the monks of that community, who were among the strongest opponents of church-reform, would stone him should he appear there. He added that he would, however, justify himself before the archbishop. On the return of Ernest, the mendicant friars presented to him their complaints against Conrad, formulated in twenty-four articles. Their contents were very futile, and to those who read the articles it will appear that the accusations of laziness, immorality, avarice, and gluttony levelled against the friars were thoroughly justified. Other accusations, such as that Conrad had said that the monks and nuns who received children for a pecuniary remuneration were " Arian heretics," are too absurd to deserve belief. Conrad's dignified answer, in which he did not deny having spoken strongly against the vices of the friars, but complained that words he had never spoken had been attributed to him, seems to have satisfied the archbishop. He caused an inscription to be placed on the doorways of all the monasteries of the mendicant friars, summoning all who might have any accusation to bring against Conrad, to appear on a certain day at the archbishop's court. No one appeared. The friars, however, continued secretly to attack the pious preacher. Thus when Duke Leopold of Austria visited Prague, the mendicant friars brought many mendacious accusations against Conrad before him.[1] The duke appears to have disbelieved these accusations, as he invited Conrad to return with him to Vienna. The conscientious preacher none the less considered it his duty to draw up a statement defending his conduct and to send it to Vienna. Of the later years of Conrad but little is known. He, however, always retained the favour of King Charles, who conferred on him the rectorship of the Tyn Church—next to the Cathedral-Church of St. Vitus, the most important one in Prague. It is a proof of the great independence of mind of King Charles, who has often

[1] The friars accused Conrad of having said that: " Prius quam homo filiam suam Simoniace traderet religioni, eligibilius esset eam meretricem fieri."

been judged very falsely by superficial writers, that he ventured to do this in face of the continued opposition to Conrad on the part of the mendicant friars. That opposition, indeed, only ceased with the death of Conrad in 1369. He left several Latin writings, among them are the *Apologia* that has already been mentioned, and an extensive *Postilla studentum sanctae universitatis Prageusis super evangelia dominica*, written on the request and for the benefit of the young students of the university. Conrad Waldhauser's writings have only been preserved in MSS.

Among those who listened to Conrad's sermons was a young priest, who was destined to become his successor on the arduous path of church-reform. I refer to John Milie of Kromerize (in German, Kremsier), whose truly Christ-like nature caused him to be revered as a saint even during his lifetime.[1] Milic was born at Kromerize probably in the early part of the fourteenth century,[2] but all tales concerning his earliest years must be considered as legendary. It is certain that he was of humble origin, and was from childhood destined for the church. He appears even in early youth to have taken his life-work more seriously than was then usual with young clerics. He read widely and showed early in life that great capacity for work and study that never left him throughout life. It is specially noted that he devoted much time to the study of Scripture, and the same has been stated of his successor Matthew of Janov. This devotion to the Bible may, indeed, be considered as generally characteristic of the Bohemian church-reformers. Though symptoms of exceptional earnestness are from the first evident in the career of Milic, he did not, and perhaps under the circumstances could not, seek preferment otherwise than in the manner then usual among young priests. Milic early in life found employment in the chancery

[1] Matthew of Janov writes: "Ipse vero Milicius filius et imago domini Jesu Christi, apostolorumque ipsius similitudo prope expressa et ostensa."
[2] Dr. Novotny, *Jan Milic z. Kromerize.*

of the Emperor Charles. The head of that chancery was then John of Streda, Bishop of Litomysl. Through the influence of Streda, Milic obtained in 1361—even before he had been ordained a priest—from Pope Innocent VI. a papal provision, bestowing on him a benefice in the archdiocese of Prague. He became a canon of St. Vitus in that city, and it appears that somewhat later the rank of archdeacon was also conferred on him. But his enthusiastic, pious, and conscientious nature induced him in 1363 already to abandon all his honours.

It has often been stated that the impression produced on Milic by the preaching of Conrad Waldhauser was the cause of this determination. It was at any rate not the only cause.[1] The work of Milic as archdeacon had given him a terrible insight into the depravation of the clergy, and he could not fail to perceive that the system of papal provisions by which he had himself benefited, contributed largely to the general demoralisation. Milic therefore considered it his duty to renounce all worldly goods, and to devote himself entirely to preaching. Being of the Bohemian nationality, he was able to preach to the people in their own language, a thing that had been impossible to Waldhauser. In the autumn of the year 1363 he began preaching at Prague, first at the Church of St. Nicholas in the " small quarter " and then at that of St. Giles in the old town. As had been the case with Waldhauser previously, Milic also was almost immediately confronted by the enmity of the mendicant friars. A man of an enthusiastic and even visionary nature, he carried out to the full the principle of apostolic poverty which he had imposed upon himself. He had given everything to the poor, and depended for his nourishment entirely on the gifts of pious women, and would accept only what was absolutely necessary to sustain life. His clothing was of the meanest description, and when he walked from one church to another—he often preached in different churches on one day in Latin, Bohemian, and German—the

[1] Novotny, *Jan Milic.*

poverty of his appearance attracted attention. But when a new garment was offered to him, he answered in the words of Christ: " If one has two cloaks, let him give one to him who has none." Similarly, " When Thomas the nobleman "—the person referred to is probably Thomas of Stitny—" said to one of the disciples of Milic: ' I see that master Milic keepeth nothing for himself; if he would but keep it for himself I would gladly give to him a good fur coat of fox skin.' " Milic refused to accept the gift under this condition, and continued to walk through the streets of Prague in mean attire, even during the terrible cold of the Bohemian winters.[1] Many other tales, often recalling St. Francis of Assisi, are told of Milic, whom the people soon began to revere as a saint. He acquired great influence over the more pious among the young priests, and it was no doubt for them that the Latin sermons mentioned above were preached.

The privations and fatigues which Milic underwent, not unnaturally produced a strong effect on an imaginative and somewhat visionary nature, such as was that of Milic. He believed that an inward spirit directed all his actions, and on the advice of this mysterious spirit, he for a time gave up preaching and resolved to become himself a mendicant friar, perhaps hoping thus to obtain greater influence over the other friars. On the advice of his friends he soon abandoned this idea. His profound and constant study of Scripture led Milic, in his state of exaltation, on strange paths. He was impressed by the evils of his time, the corruption of the clergy, the dissolution of all social order in Germany and Italy. Anarchy caused by bands of freebooters, who pillaged Italy and afterwards Germany, produced so great and terrifying an impression on the public mind, that even the insane idea that the Emperor Charles encouraged these bands to continue their depredations found adherents. So hopelessly evil a state appeared to Milic to portend the approaching end of the world—an idea with which

[1] Tomek, *History of the Town of Prague*, vol. iii.

we meet frequently in the writings of all Bohemian reformers—Hus himself not excepted. The inward spirit which guided Milic drew his attention to the passage in St. Matthew's evangel which refers to Daniel's prophecy.[1] Milic now began to study these prophecies with great attention, and obtained from them the conviction that the time when Antichrist would appear had already arrived.[2] While under the influence of these studies, Milic, when preaching in the presence of the Emperor, pointed at him denouncing him as Antichrist. Though here also Charles showed that special forbearance to the Bohemian church-reformers which has been overlooked by those who have described him as a bigot; it was impossible that so public an affront should pass unnoticed. Archbishop Vlasim who had, in 1364, succeeded to Ernest of Pardubice, caused Milic to be imprisoned, and he ordered Dean William of Lestkov, and "the learned Master Adalbert (the person referred to is in all probability Ranco) to examine the orthodoxy of the teaching of Milic. They declared that they found nothing heretical in it, and Master Adalbert in particular stated that he could not examine the truth of that which had evidently been said under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

Probably in consequence of this favourable decision, Milic was soon released from prison. He resolved now to carry out a plan he had previously formed to visit Rome. Pope Urban V. was then expected there from Avignon. On Milic's arrival in Rome in the spring of the year 1367, the pope had not yet come there, and Milic, after waiting a month, decided to proceed to Avignon, hoping to meet him there. But before he started on his new journey, the inward spirit willed him to announce in a sermon the approaching appearance of Antichrist. Of this sermon, he affixed a copy on the gates of St. Peter's Church. He was arrested by order of the inquisition

[1] Chap. xxiv. 15.

[2] Novotny, *Jan Milic*. Dr. Novotny gives a curious account of the calculations—based on Daniel, chap. xii. v. 10-12—which led Milic to this conclusion.

while praying within that church, and imprisoned in the monastery of Ara Coeli in the capital. It is probable that the mendicant friars in Bohemia had already denounced him in Rome, and when the news of his imprisonment reached Prague, they joyfully declared in their sermons that Milic would soon be burnt.[1] While in prison, Milic employed his time in formulating his views on the appearance of Antichrist—a subject in which he was then entirely absorbed. It was at this time that he wrote his *Prophecia et Revelatio de Antichristo*.[2] It was also while he was in prison that he wrote a long letter to Pope Urban V. The order of ideas in both writings is very similar; in both he denounces in burning and apocalyptic language the terrible depravity of the prelates, the monks, the nuns of his time. In both he also enlarges on the, to him, ever-present subject of the advent of Antichrist. Incidentally he also, in the *Prophecia*, explains the reasons that induced him to visit Rome. He writes that the inward spirit that guided him said, "Go and tell the supreme pontiff to bring back the church to the state of salvation."[3] In his letter to the pope

[1] The author of the *Life of Milic*, published in the works of Balbinus, writes of the return of Milic and his companion to Prague: "Cum vero Pragam pervenissent quasi nova lux omnibus Christi fidelibus orta fuisset, ita gaudebant quia per Viros Religiosos mendicantes saepe in eorum praedicationibus undubant ubi dicebatur: *Charissimi ecce jam Militius cremabitur.* (*Miscellanea Historica Regni Bohemiae*, liber. iv.)

[2] This book must not be confounded with the treatise, *De Anatomia Antichristi*—printed in the Nuremberg edition of the works of Hus—which is not by Milic. The book has also been ascribed to Matthew of Janov. Recent research proves that it was written after the siege of Prague in 1420 by a Hussite who used the writings of Janov. (See Dr. Kybal, *Matey z. Janova*, and the same writer's study in the *Cesky Casopis Historicky* (Bohemian Historical Yearbook), vol. xi.)

[3] "Postremo incepi attendere, quomodo esset de statu et salute Christianorum. Et stans in hoc stupefactus audivi spiritum in me sic loquentem in corde. Vade et dic summo pontifici, qui ab hoc Spiritu sancto electus est,' ut reducat ecclesiam in statum salutis, ut mittat angelos sive praedicatores cum tuba praedicationis et voce magna, ut tollant praedicta scandala de regno Dei sive de ecclesia, ut quia messis, id est consummatio saeculi venit jam eradicent zizania, id est haereticos et pseudoprophetas, ypocritas, beghardos et beginas et scismaticos, qui omnes per Gog et Magog significantur detegant. . . ." (*Vestnik Kr. c. Spolecnosti Nauk* (Journal of the Bohemian Learned Society), 1890. Mr. Mencik has here published for the first time Milic's prophecy and his letter to Pope Urban V.)

he also strongly insists on the necessity of assembling a general council of the church in Rome.

On the arrival of Pope Urban in Rome, Milic was released from prison after he had had an interview with the Cardinal of Albano, and discussed his views with him. The cardinal appears to have acquired considerable influence over Milic. Thenceforth we find that the Bohemian preacher laid less stress on his views concerning the impending advent of Antichrist. The Cardinal of Albano treated him with great honour, received him in his house, and ordered those who had maligned him to beg his pardon. Milic then returned to Prague " without hindrance, comforted, and appeased." On his return to his country, he was as zealous for the welfare of his fellowmen as before, but in his sermons as far as possible avoided to touch on matters of dogma. Like all Bohemian church-reformers, he strove rather to denounce the immorality, avarice, luxury, haughtiness of the Bohemian people, and ecclesiastics in particular, to inculcate the study of Scripture, to help the poor, humble, and oppressed, than to excel in scholastic definitions and theological sophistry. Milic, indeed, after his return from Rome became even more stringent in his ascetism and more enthusiastic in his attempts to aid the poor and suffering. He now abstained entirely from the use of meat and wine, allowed himself but a limited time for sleep, slept on a hard couch, and frequently used the rod for the chastisement of his body. The fame of the sanctity of Milic soon spread through Prague, though the mendicant friars and most of the parish-priests, who considered his saintly bearing a tacit condemnation of their evil lives, continued his bitter enemies. A certain number of friends now gathered round him, who sympathised with his labours and admired the sanctity of his life. Such men were Conrad Waldhauser, Adalbert Ranco, Thomas of Stitny, Matthew of Janov. Of these men formerly little was known but their names, and our present knowledge is almost entirely founded on researches made within the last twenty

or thirty years. It is indeed probable that, even now, much information concerning the forerunners of Hus exists in unpublished MSS.

During the later years of his life, Milic lived almost entirely in Prague, though he again proceeded to Rome in 1369. Of the cause of this journey little is known, but we read that it was of short duration. His return was hastened by the news of the death of his old friend, Conrad Waldhauser. Kindly as ever, Milic considered it his duty to take on himself the liabilities of his friend that his creditors might not suffer. After this short absence, Milic began again to devote himself to works of charity and piety. He was indeed able to do this on a larger scale than before, as he became Conrad Waldhauser's successor as rector of the Tyn Church. He still refused to possess money or any but the most necessary worldly goods, and devoted all his revenues to pious works. Like many saintly men, he was deeply impressed by the pity of the fate of fallen women. His eloquent sermons had caused some of these women to repent, and Milic endeavoured to rescue them permanently. Enthusiast though he was, he was not devoid of capacity for business when it was the welfare of others, not his own, that was at stake. Aided by a few friends, he bought a house near the Church of St. Giles, and placed there the women whom he had rescued from the worst of slaveries. They were under the supervision of "Margaret of Moravia," a worthy and intelligent woman, who instructed them in needlework and household duties. Some then, under Milic's auspices, went into domestic service, others were sent home to their families, and a few married.[1] By permission of the archbishop, a small chapel was erected where mass was said and where Milic preached twice daily, once in Bohemian and once in German; for though he had originally spoken his own language only, he later acquired a thorough knowledge of German. The

[1] Novotny, *Jan Milic.*

accounts of Milic's "mission," as we may call it, have a very modern character, and are so interesting that I regret being unable to quote from them more extensively.

Milic's foundation soon became too small for the many who begged to be admitted to it. The Emperor Charles, however, whose favour Milic had never lost, came to his aid. It is impossible not to express here admiration for a sovereign who continued to protect a preacher who had offered him what, to the pious mind of Charles, must have appeared the most deadly of insults—one that many a ruler of the fourteenth century would have requited by the most terrible tortures. Charles ordered the buildings on an ill-famed spot at Prague, known as Benatky (Venice), to be destroyed, and presented the ground to Milic. On September 19, 1372, the foundation-stone of the new buildings was laid. They consisted of a church consecrated to the "sinning saints Mary Magdalene, Afra, and the Egyptain Mary," a large building occupied by the female penitents, and a smaller one in which Milic and his disciples dwelt. Alluding to a passage in the Revelation,[1] a book that was always in his mind, Milic gave the name of Jerusalem to this new foundation. The new buildings in time, however, again became too small, but aided by pious benefactors Milic was soon able to enlarge them by buying several neighbouring houses. The community soon acquired a somewhat monastic character. Milic enjoined all its members to attend mass daily, to receive communion frequently, and to devote all their time to deeds of penitence. It was frequently stated that the members of the community were distinguished by a peculiar dress, but this is expressly denied by the author of the biography of Milic, which is included in the works of Balbinus.

At this period Milic also suffered greatly from the hostility of the parish priests of Prague, who now allied themselves with the mendicant friars, his old enemies. The details of the dispute are not very clear. Here also it may be hoped that

[1] Revelation, chap. xxi. 10-27.

further archival research will add to our information.[1] As already mentioned, many priests in Prague were irritated by the example set them by the saintly life of Milic. As a pretext for an attack on him, they used the foundation of "Jerusalem," which, they said, interfered with their jurisdiction. At a general meeting of the parochial clergy of Prague, it was decided to bring their complaints against Milic before the archiepiscopal vicar; only a few of the poorer priests expressed dissent, but the other said, "You favourers of Milic, go hence." Both Milic and his opponents appeared at the archiepiscopal court and the priests violently attacked him saying, "Since thou hast begun to preach we have no peace, but rather constantly much vexation." Milic answered, "As it was in the beginning and now and for ever. Amen." They then, enraged at his being so different from them, called him a hypocrite and a beghard, and said other vile words.

Formal proceedings against Milic were subsequently taken at the archiepiscopal court, John Pecnik, canon of the Vysehrad, who has already been mentioned [2] acting as spokesman for the priests. The proceedings were very protracted, but it is evident that Archbishop Ocko, though he acted with great caution, was in favour of Milic. The priests, therefore, decided to appeal to the pope, and drew up a lengthy document formulating their complaints. They insisted principally on Milic's views concerning Antichrist, though he had long abandoned these views. They also stated that he had encouraged the inmates of "Jerusalem" to receive communion very frequently. This was undoubtedly true, and we meet with this complaint very often in the records of the Hussite movement. The document also gave a distorted account of the preaching of Milic, and en-

[1] The account of Milic by Matthew of Janov, printed by Höfler, *Geschichte der Hussitischen Bewegung*, ii. p. 40, from the library of the Bohemian Museum, is very short. I have already quoted Janov's description of the nature of Milic. Of the persecutions he endured Janov only writes: "Cum Mylicius carissimus . . . bona opera . . . in Praga perfecit, nihil aliud nisi obprobria vituperia et persecutiones continuas ab antichristianis in Praga eadem reportavit."

[2] *See* p. 15.

deavoured, probably on the trumped-up evidence of some women who had run away from "Jerusalem," to attack his moral character. This document was entrusted to one Master Klenkot, who was to carry it to Avignon. Early in the year 1374, Archbishop Ocko received a bull from Pope Gregory XI. declaring that he had been informed that Milic had spread certain heretical and schismatic doctrines in Bohemia, and that he was surprised at the negligence of the archbishop and the other bishops; the pope ordered that the matter should be investigated and proceedings taken against Milic according to the ecclesiastical regulations, and, if necessary, with the aid of the secular arm. This message deeply afflicted the archbishop, and it was Milic himself who comforted him, saying that by the help of God he would prove that he had only spoken the truth. Though Ocko still believed in the innocence of Milic, the papal bull forced him to order a new investigation of the accusations. Milic, however, preferred to appeal to the pope, and having obtained financial aid from some of his friends, he started for Avignon in March 1374. The papal see was very suspicious of heresies at that moment when the whole Catholic world was in a disturbed state, and the dignitaries of Avignon appear to have to a certain extent believed the accusations of Klenkot. Matters changed with the arrival of Milic, and the more worthy among the churchmen did not fail to perceive the saintliness of the man. Milic again found a friend in his former protector the Cardinal of Albano. The accuser Klenkot was called on to substantiate his accusations against Milic, but entirely failed to do so. When he fell ill, shortly afterwards, Milic offered prayers for his recovery, and this truly Christ-like act contributed to convincing the prelates of the saintliness of the Bohemian preacher. Milic was declared to be entirely innocent, was authorised to preach before the assembled cardinals, and was invited to dine with the Cardinal of Albano after the sermon. The triumph of his good cause, not the honours bestowed on him, we are told, gave him great joy.

But Milic's earthly career was now drawing to an end, and he was soon to enjoy that peace which he had so nobly earned. The privations and persecutions which he had endured had entirely exhausted him. He fell dangerously ill, and died at at Avignon, probably at the end of the year 1374. The author of the biography of Milic,[1] gives a touching account of his last hours. He left a letter addressed to the Cardinal of Albano, who burst into tears when he received it, saying that Milic deserved to be canonised. In Prague a reactionary movement had meanwhile broken out, and several of Milic's disciples were imprisoned. The " Jerusalem " foundation also was suppressed in the year of the death of its founder; but that the results of the labours of the saintly man should not entirely perish, the emperor decreed that the foundation of " the worthy Milic of good memory, our pious and beloved one "—to quote the words of Charles—should be given over to Cistercian monks. To satisfy the rancour of the enemies of Milic, it was, however, decreed that the foundation should in future bear the name of St. Bernard. These measures did not alienate from Milic the affection of the people of Prague, who continued to venerate him as a saint.

Before ending this brief account of the career of Milic, it is necessary to point out that he never incurred the reproach of expressing heretical views. His statement that Antichrist would shortly appear was an attack, not against the popes whom indeed Milic revered, but against the Emperor Charles who wisely overlooked this temporary aberration in consideration of the great merits of the saintly man. The question of frequent communion was, at the time of Milic, only just beginning to become a subject of controversy. The careers of Waldhauser and Milic, however, prove that at that period in Bohemia every priest who lauded poverty and denounced

[1] This biography is printed with the works of Balbinus, a learned Bohemian Jesuit of the seventeenth century, who, however, is not the author of the biography.

simony and immorality incurred the almost diabolical hatred of the more vicious and luxurious among the higher members of the Bohemian Church—and this quite independently of dogmatical controversies. We shall meet with this hatred again when dealing with Hus, and it has not been sufficiently noted by writers who, though thoroughly versed in theology, did not devote much time to the study of Bohemian history. The literary work of Milic appears to have been considerable, but only a few Latin writings of inconsiderable size—to which I have already alluded—have been preserved and printed, while none of his Bohemian works, which are said to have been numerous, have escaped destruction.

The next of the little band of Bohemian church-reformers whom I shall mention was Thomas of Stitny [1] (*b.* 1331; *d.* 1401). He differed in many respects from the others. He never obtained or sought ecclesiastical offices, nor even took holy orders. Though one of the earliest students of the University of Prague, he afterwards retired to his ancestral home, where he spent the greatest part of his life. There is, however, no doubt that he frequently returned to Prague, as his writings contain many allusions to his personal relations with Waldhauser, Milic, Ranco, and Janov. In contrast to the other reformers—to whom only a few writings in the national language are attributed, sometimes on doubtful evidence—Stitny wrote in Bohemian only. He appears to have generally lead a retired life, nor do his writings seem to have attracted much attention at the time. The learned masters of the university strongly disapproved of the use of the national language for the purpose of philosophical or theological controversy, and indeed thought it unseemly that laymen, who had taken no degree, should express their opinion on such matters. It might, therefore, appear that the writings of Stitny were devoid of importance; yet nothing is less true. The ideas and theories developed by Stitny penetrated widely among

[1] For Stitny, see my *History of Bohemian Literature*, 2nd edition, pp. 63-79.

the nobility and the smaller landowners of Bohemia, men who afterwards took so prominent a part in the Hussite wars. Stitny's works also bear witness to the high degree of culture which Bohemia had already reached, as well to the great interest in matters of religion which at most periods of history we find among the people of Bohemia. I have elsewhere written extensively on the works of Stitny. It will here only be necessary to refer to his writings as far as they are connected with the cause of church-reform in Bohemia.

Thomas of Stitny, who belonged to the smaller nobility of Bohemia, was born at the castle—or "tower," to use the Bohemian designation—of Stitny, in Southern Bohemia. As already mentioned, he visited the University of Prague shortly after its foundation, and being of a studious nature soon fell under the influence of the preaching of Waldhauser and Milic.[1] He viewed with great indignation the persecution on the part of the mendicant friars which these pious preachers then suffered. In the chapter of his work, *Of General Christian Matters*,[2] which treats of monkery, Stitny writes, obviously alluding to these persecutions: "They (the monks) quarrel, hate one another, revile one another . . . and, what is most terrible, every worthy preacher, every good man displeases them, for he sees their errors; gladly would they declare such a man a heretic that they might more freely practise their wiles." Stitny writes yet more clearly in one of his yet unpublished works [3] "Thus within my memory the devil incited them (the monks) against Conrad, a noble preacher of God's truth, and they said that he was an apostate, because he exposed the wiles of false priesthood and taught that which is truth; thus also were they hostile to the good Milic; and the evil spoke evilly of him, but it was false. There are some also

[1] See Erben's Introduction to his edition of Stitny's *O obecnych vecech krestanskych* (Of general Christian matters).

[2] Book iv. p. 136 of Erben's edition.

[3] Quoted by Erben in his Introduction to the book, *Of General Christian Matters*, p. viii.

who would be glad if that which I write were drowned, because they wish that they alone should appear wise." Somewhat later, in the same manuscript, Stitny again refers to "the priest Conrad and the priest Milic who were in Prague, faithful and brave preachers of God's word, one to the Germans, the other to the Bohemians; because they spoke against this, that men in holy orders live in an unholy fashion, many thundered at them with insolent and untruthful speeches, and even now these speak evilly of them who say of evil that it is not evil, and of these good men that they were not good."

It has already been frequently pointed out that we find much in common in the views of the Bohemian reformers. Common to all is an intense devotion to the Holy Bible. I have already alluded to it, and shall have to do so again when writing of Matthew of Janov. In Stitny, this feeling is very strong; he writes:[1] "This also mark carefully, beloved brethren, that the Holy Scriptures are truly like letters that are sent to us from our home; for our home is heaven, and our friends are the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and martyrs, and our fellow-citizens are the angels with whom we shall be, and our king is Christ." Similarly as regards eschatological matters and the supposed advent of Antichrist—a subject that then was in the minds of all, particularly in Bohemia—the views of Stitny recall those of Milic. Thus referring to a passage in the Revelation,[2] Stitny writes :[3] "The movement of the earth is the movement of the people who are withdrawing from the truth. The sun signifies the papal throne and the moon the imperial one, and the falling stars signify those of both estates who fall from heavenly desires to earthly ones, and from order to disorder. Another matter in which the Bohemian reformers incurred the enmity of the more numerous and less worthy

[1] Second preface to the work, *Of General Christian Matters*, p. 5 of Erben's edition.

[2] Chapter vi. 12-13.

[3] MS. quoted in Erben's Introduction to the book, *Of General Christian Matters*, p. x.

members of the Bohemian clergy, was their recommendation of the frequent communion of laymen. This was very distasteful to many priests whose pride induced them to extend as far as possible the lines that divided them from the laity. It is also probable, as Professor Tomak has shrewdly conjectured,[1] that they thought that constant administration of the sacrament of the altar took up too much of their time, while the remuneration was very scant. The question of frequent communion together with that of communion in the two kinds, plays a very large part in the Hussite movement. The claim of laymen to receive communion as frequently and in the same form as ecclesiastics, was an outcome of the Bohemian view, that all worthy Christians are equally members of God's church. As has happened not infrequently, the less worthy the clergy became, the greater became its claims to a superior and exclusive position. At this period we often meet in Bohemia with the theory that even the worst priest is better than the best layman. On the subject of frequent communion Stitny expresses himself clearly. He writes:[2] "I wonder at those many wise people who have strenuously opposed the wishes of those who desire to receive frequently the body of God. How much better would it be if such men would rather diligently teach goodness to instruct those who wish frequently to receive the body of God; and with what rage do they blame without reflection all who, not being priests, frequently receive the body of God. Haply also Milic was offensive to them, he who taught the people God's will in truth and in the unity of God's faith differing nowise from the Holy Scripture."

Though we thus find in Stitny much that is common to all Bohemian reformers, he differed from them particularly in the later years of his life, by displaying more caution and greater subserviency to the Church of Rome. He frequently asserts

[1] *History of the Town of Prague*, vol. iii.
[2] MS. printed by Erben in his Introduction to the book, *Of General Christian Matters*, p. ix.

that he does not intend to write anything contrary to the teaching of that church, and declares, "Should I have written anything unwisely, I wish to state that I do not intend to hold any views except those held by the Christian community, and the University of Prague." This passage is interesting as foreshadowing the great authority on theological matters which the University of Prague acquired during the Hussite wars. As regards the question of the veneration of pictures, Stitny writes in a very moderate manner, declaring, perhaps in not unintentional opposition to Matthew of Janov, who had very strong views on this subject: "I am not one of those who think that there should be no images among Chrstians. I think they exaggerate; for we may have pictures instead of writings as a memorial of such (holy) things, but not that such a picture be as a likeness of God." [1] With great humility, Stitny deferred to those whom he believed to possess profounder learning than he himself could claim. In a letter addressed to Adalbert Ranco, "that master of stupenduous intellect and wondrous memory, who first of the Bohemians obtained the mastership of Holy Scripture at the University of Paris," Stitny, while sending him his book *Of General Christian Matters*, begs him to correct his writings should they contain anything contrary to Scripture.

Stitny's writings were very numerous, and he constantly re-wrote them, sometimes altering their names. He did not begin writing early in life; and of his two greatest works the first, the book *Of General Christian Matters* (*O obecnych vecech Krestanskych*) [3] was only finished in 1376. It deals mainly with theological matters, but the book, written for the instruction of Stitny's children, contains much excellent advice on matters of daily life. More pretentious is Stitny's other great work, entitled *Besedni Reci*,[4] which may be translated by

[1] Erben, Introduction to his edition of the book, *Of General Christian Matters*.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Edition by Erben, 1852.
[4] Edited by Professor Hattala, 1897.

*Learned Entertainments*. The book is an attempt to define, according to the scholastic system, the personality of God and His attributes. It is in strict accordance with the doctrine of Rome, as far as that doctrine had been developed at the time of Stitny. As already noted, Stitny, towards the end of his life, became much more moderate in his denunciations of the iniquities of his time, and the later manuscripts of his works are far more obsequious to the Roman Church than the earlier ones had been. While the reform movement continuously assumed a more advanced character, Stitny's caution became ever greater, and he was at the end of his life no longer in touch with the leaders of a movement to the development of which he had largely contributed. Stitny's merits as a Bohemian writer are very great; he was the first to employ the national language as a medium for the discussion of theological and philosophical questions. He was in this also a true forerunner of Hus, whose great merits for the development of the language of his country have only lately been recognised. In the last years of his life, Stitny returned to Prague, and lived there up to his death in 1401. At this period his constant companion was his daughter, Anna, or Anezka, as he called her. After his death she occupied part of a house near the Bethlehem chapel where Hus was shortly to begin to preach. It is known that several pious ladies lived in community in a house near Hus's chapel. If, as is probable, Anezka of Stitny was one of these ladies, the fact forms an interesting link between Stitny and his greater successor.

In connection with Stitny and the other reformers previously mentioned, the name of Adolbert Ranco (known also as Ranconis, or Rankuv) cannot be omitted. The details of his life are very obscure,[1] though we meet with his name

[1] I have mainly based this brief account of the career of Ranco on an article by Dr. Tadra, entitled "Mistr Vojtech Rankuv," which appeared in the *Casopis Musea Kralovstvi Ceskeho* (Journal of the Bohemian Museum), for 1879. Previously Dr. Loserth had published an outline of the career of Ranco in his *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Hussitischen Bewegung*, ii. Dr. Loserth's study shows great animus against Ranco.

constantly in the writings of the Bohemian reformers, and he was famed as the most learned Bohemian of his time. It is permissible to include him among the Bohemian reformers, not only because of his constant relations with these men, which I have frequently mentioned, but also because he, as he has stated in a letter to which I have already alluded, complained of the hostility of the mendicant friars who accused him of being an "Armachanus." The year of the birth of Ranco is uncertain, but we find him a student at the University of Paris in 1348. He there belonged to the "English" nation, which, besides English, included also Scotchmen and Germans as well as the few students from Slavic countries. Ranco soon obtained the reputation of being a very profound theologian, and the university conferred great honours on him—a fact to which Stitny alluded in a passage that I have quoted above. In 1355, Ranco became rector of the University of Paris, and he appears to have remained in France for a considerable time. He must, however, have returned to his country some time before the year 1364, as we read that he was in that year one of the canons of the cathedral of Prague, who were appointed to report on the orthodoxy of the views of Milic. Ranco, as already stated, declared that Milic had spoken under the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost. From the somewhat scanty statements concerning Ranco which have reached us, it appears that he was not a man of a conciliatory nature, and he was frequently involved in the sometimes turbulent theological controversies that then raged at the university. The fact that Ranco, at a time when the university was still largely German, openly declared himself a Bohemian, and defended the interests of his countrymen, drew on him the hatred of many of the German scholars. Probably, in consequence of this ill-will, Ranco again left Bohemia and proceeded to Avignon. He appears at this time also to have lost the favour of the emperor; but Charles, always lenient to truly pious and zealous churchmen, soon allowed him to return to his country. On

the death of the emperor in 1378, Ranco was awarded the honour of pronouncing a funereal oration.[1] Ranco died in 1388, after having made a will which instituted a foundation for the benefit of poor students of the Bohemian nationality who might wish to study theology or the free arts at the Universities of Oxford or Paris. By this will, Ranco incurred the hostility, not only of the German writers of his time, but also of those of the present day.

Ranco's fame as a preacher was very great in his time, and the scanty remains of his sermons that have been preserved lead us to believe that this fame was justified. Ranco's sermon on the death of the Emperor Charles has already been mentioned. The "synodal oration," delivered by Ranco in 1385, is also very interesting. He here inveighs against the simony, avarice, and immorality of the clergy in a manner that recalls Waldhauser and Milic.[2]

As regards Ranco's theological controversies, some rise little above the level of scholastic disputes, and require no notice here. Two of these controversies are, however, of interest, as they concern views that are characteristic of all Bohemian reformers. It has already been noted and will have again to be stated later, that these reformers laid great stress on the merits of the frequent communion of laymen. On this subject Ranco addressed a letter to the rector of St. Martin's Church in the "old town" Albert Martin. This letter, which is distinguished by great broadness of mind and moderation, attracted great attention at the time it appeared. It has been

[1] Printed in the *Fontes Rerum Bohemicarum*, vol. iii. pp. 433-441.

[2] Thus Ranco writes: " . . . Videamus et consideremus diligenter, qualibus nunc ecclesia spousa Christi commissa paranymphis et dico quod in primitiva ecclesia sanctos et perfectos suae puritatis custodes . . . nunc autem ista versa propter aliquos majores clericos in oppositam qualitatem dum videmus aliquos ad eam venire per pecunian allatam vel post solutam et datam peius quam Simon Magus. . . . Addo quod mille annis in clero non fuerit tam scurilis habitus ut nunc est, qui multum attestatur super inordinata clericorum vita, nam mihi non est dubium quod tales clerici inordinatum habitum exterius ferentes sint in mente inordinati, corrupti et viciati. . . ." (MS. of University Library, Prague, quoted by Tadra, *Voytech Rankuv.*)

preserved in several MSS., and Matthew of Janov quotes it in his *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti.*" Ranco writes: "Were I rector (farar) of a church, and laymen came to me, men or women, desiring to receive daily the sacrament of the altar, I would not permit this, except indeed if daily communion had long been established as a general custom; for a good preparation is required, which those who live among worldly people cannot obtain. If, however, someone is declared by his confessor—an honest and sensible man, not a flatterer—to be sufficiently perfect, and this man has a true and ardent desire to receive the sacrament frequently, then his rector or the vicar, with the assent of the rector or his confessor, may admit him to communion at intervals of eight days, unless the statutes of the synods decree otherwise."

Another controversy of some importance in which Ranco took part referred to the foundation of a new festival in honour of the Virgin Mary. John of Jenzenstein, who succeeded his uncle, Ocko of Vlasim, as archbishop of Prague, had a particular devotion to the Madonna, and he founded in her honour a new festival to which he gave the name of the Visitation (*Festum Visitationis S. Mariæ in Montanis*). He informed the synod of his decision, which had been taken without obtaining the consent of the pope, announcing at the same time that the new festival would be kept on July 2. The archiepiscopal vicar then informed the assembled canons of the cathedral of Prague of the archbishop's resolution, inviting them to express their views on the subject. Adalbert Ranco then rose and spoke strongly, not, indeed, against the new festival, but against the action of the archbishop who had founded it without the permission of the pope and the consent of the canons. As far as can be judged, these arguments were but a pretext, as the archbishop had not indeed consulted the pope, but had informed him of the decree at the time he issued it. The attitude of Adalbert was undoubtedly a protest against what he considered an exaggerated devotion to the Virgin Mary. There

is no doubt that Archbishop Jenzenstein viewed it in this light, for he became greatly incensed against Ranco. Even when the latter, having fallen ill, endeavoured to pacify Jenzenstein, the archbishop replied most ungraciously, stating that Ranco no doubt wished to amend himself because of his fear of approaching death, and that it was for that reason also that he had begun to fast, pray, and do good works. When Ranco was dying, the archbishop sent to him the provost of Roudnice to tell him to desist from calumniating the virgin, otherwise he would have to fear her wrath. When Ranco died on August 15, the day of the Assumption of Mary, Jenzenstein regarded this as a confirmation of the truth of his warning.[1]

The last and greatest of the forerunners of Hus was Matthew of Janov. His career has up to recent times been very little known, and only one incident in his life—an incident that is not very creditable—appears to have attracted the attention of his contemporaries. Of the writers of the nineteenth century few have devoted much time and study to Janov. Foremost among these is Palacky, the Pathfinder, who first penetrated into the almost complete darkness which formerly surrounded the forerunners of Hus. Palacky's *Vorläufer des Hussitenthumes* is a valuable work even seventy years after its appearance. About the same time the Protestant divine, Neander, also devoted considerable attention to the study of Janov. Neander's statement that Matthew of Janov went further in his opposition to Rome than Hus has been frequently challenged both by German and by Bohemian writers. It contains, however, a great deal of truth. That the importance of Matthew has been underrated both by the friends and foes of Rome is undoubtedly due to his formal recantation of his opinions, which became widely known. The Romanists, to whose teaching he had conformed, had no wish to perpetuate the memory of his former errors, as they considered them. The Hussites, on the other hand, always bore in mind his submission—caused

[1] Tomek, *History of the Town of Prague*, vol. iii.

by cowardice, or, as it is more charitable to suppose, by the scepticism that is sometimes the result of profound study. The Hussites rarely referred to Matthew of Janov, and some of his works were even attributed to other writers. The enthusiastic partisans of church-reform could not fail to contrast his attitude with the indomitable heroism and self-sacrifice of Hus.

It is only recently that a book has appeared dealing with Matthew of Janov which can be considered as giving a thorough account of the life and works of this great Bohemian reformer. I refer to the work *Matej z. Janova* by Dr. Kybal, one of the most promising of the younger historians of Bohemia. The book is founded on sound archival research in Prague—no slight merit, as the state of most of the archives at Prague is still one of great disorder. Dr. Kybal has also begun to edit the *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*,[1] the life-work of Matthew.

The events of the life of Matthew of Janov do not require a detailed account. The year of his birth and his birthplace are both uncertain. We have, however, evidence to prove that he was born previously to the year 1355, and we know that he belonged, like Stitny, to the smaller nobility of Bohemia. He probably went to Prague early in life, and we have his own authority for stating that he there came under the influence of Milic of Kromerice, whose memory he cherished throughout life. Whether Janov also knew Waldhauser at Prague is uncertain. The teaching of Milic naturally tended to confirm in Janov the special devotion to the Holy Scriptures which is characteristic of all Bohemian church-reformers. He tells us:[2] "I have loved the Bible since my youth and called it my friend and bride—verily the mother of beateous affection, and knowledge, and fear, and holy hope."

Though dates here also continue uncertain, we know that Matthew pursued his studies at the University of Paris. He

[1] Dr. Kybal's complete edition of the *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti* will consist of six volumes; the first appeared in 1908.

[2] *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, Proemium (p. 12 of Dr. Kybal's edition).

was probably there from 1373 to 1381. He became, like all Bohemians, a member of the English "nation," and pursued his studies with great diligence. He obtained many academic honours, and soon became known as the *Magister Parisiensis*, the name under which he is generally mentioned by contemporary writers. Among other academic honours Matthew obtained that of licentiate of the free arts. Because of his great poverty he was exempted from paying the fees customary on such occasions.[1] In the same year—1376—he became master of the free arts, but henceforth devoted himself mainly to the study of theology. After having been ordained a priest in 1378, Janov endeavoured to obtain a papal provision—almost the only way in which, at that corrupt period of the church, a poor man could obtain his livelihood within the ecclesiastic state. For this purpose Matthew twice visited Rome, and it is certain that the difficulties, humiliations, and expenses, very large for a poor man, which he encountered while submitting his petitions, greatly embittered his mind.[2] He was, however, finally successful in his mission, and on May 1, 1381, Pope Urban VI. conferred on him the expectancy on a canonry of the cathedral of Prague. After again visiting Paris, Janov returned to Bohemia, and presented the papal letters which he had received. The rank of canon was conferred on him, but there being then no vacant benefice he remained in Prague, a *pauper philosophans* as he himself expresses it. He was, however, befriended by Adalbert Ranco, who gave him hospitality in a house belonging to the canons of Prague.[3] It was probably also through the influence of Ranco that Matthew obtained at the end of the year 1381, the office of penitentiary to the archbishop. His duties consisted mainly in taking the

[1] Kybal, *Matej z. Janova.*

[2] He himself writes feelingly on this subject: "Pro quibus (provisions) oportel adire sedes praelatorum et tremebunde coram ipsis pro talibus supplicare et impetrare difficulter non sine impensis magnis et expensis, saltem scriptoribus ipsorum pro literis super impetrato confectis et formatis. (*Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamanti*, lib. iii., tract 4, quoted by Kybal).

[3] Tadra, *Mistr Vojtech Rankuv.*

place of the archbishop at the confessional. About the same time he was also appointed preacher at the Cathedral Church of St. Vitus. To these new dignities, however, no remuneration appears to have been attached; but finally Janov obtained the office of parish-priest at Velika Ves (Michelsdorf). Though deriving his income from this office, he continued to reside at Prague. An indefatigable worker, he found time, in spite of his numerous occupations, to continue at the University of Prague the studies which he had begun in Paris, and in addition to his Latin sermons at St. Vitus, he also preached in Latin in the Church of St. Nicholas in the old town. In these Bohemian sermons, Ranco expressed views similar to those with which we meet in his writings. He spoke very strongly against the then prevalent practice of venerating the pictures and statues of saints. He declared that the pictures of Christ and the saints give opportunities for idolatry; therefore should they be burnt or destroyed, not invoked and honoured by the bending of knees and the lighting of tapers before them. He further stated that it should not be believed that God, through these images, works miracles for the benefit of those who venerate them. Janov farther stated that it was not true that the saints in heaven and their remains (such as their bodies, bones, clothing, jewels, etc.) should be honoured here on earth, nor that these saints could by their merits and intercession be more helpful to men than those saints who still live upon earth. Another tenet which Matthew expressed and maintained in his Bohemian sermons was that of daily communion, which he warmly commended to those who assisted at his sermons at St. Nicholas' Church.[1]

These opinions were undoubtedly contrary to the teaching of Rome, and perhaps approached more closely to what afterwards became known as a Protestant standpoint than did any assertions of Hus. The archiepiscopal consistory found in these sermons a welcome reason for taking proceedings

[1] Kybal, *Matej z. Janova.*

against Matthew, who had previously already incurred their distrust and dislike. His life of study, untouched by even the slightest taint of immorality, contrasted in a very vivid manner with that of most of the priests of Prague, whose time was spent in hunting, dicing, feasting, and other even less edifying occupations. In October 1388, a decree of the synod of Prague declared that no layman should be admitted to communion oftener than once a month, and shortly afterwards it was decreed that the laymen should be enjoined to address their prayers to pictures, and believe in their miraculous powers. A year later, Janov was summoned to appear before the archiepiscopal court, and he was obliged to retract his views at a solemn meeting of the synod on October 19, 1398.[1] As a punishment Matthew was forbidden to celebrate mass, preach, or administer the sacrament anywhere except in his parish church at Velika-Ves.

"Matthew's recantation," as Dr. Kybal writes, "was made unwillingly and insincerely." He refers to the incident frequently in the *Regulae*, where he speaks of those "who honour to the highest degree the saints in heaven while they persecute the saintly Christians who are near to them and are their contemporaries; those who rob the saints who live at their time, while they clothe the bones of the dead saints in gold and silver; who sanctify the apostles and other preachers who are dead, while they condemn and insult the faithful preachers and priests who live at their own time."[2]

As Matthew considered that the judgment against him was entirely unjust, the result of the wickedness of worldly-minded men, he continued to preach and write in the same spirit as before; he continued to enjoin the faithful to receive

[1] The retractation is published by Palacky, *Documenta mag. Joannis Hus*, pp. 699 and 700. The statements retracted are exactly those mentioned above. As regards the important question of the veneration of images, Janov declared: "Dico . . . quod secundum institutionem et consuetudinem sanctæ matris ecclesiae debent imagines ad honorem illorum quos designant, adorari et venerari. . ."

[2] Quoted by Kybal from a MS. of Janov.

communion frequently, and his language with regard to the worship of images became even stronger than before. He writes[1] that "the simple-minded are seduced in a damnable manner, for they confer, as it were, a divine power on a wooden or stony image, and regard it with amazement, reverence, and affection, forgetting that it is but a senseless and lifeless block of wood, neither blessed nor consecrated by the word of God. Verily, any gallows is more acceptable and more useful in a city than some much-honoured picture or statue in a church, for by means of the gallows God's justice is accomplished and indicated, and the wickedness of the people is diminished. . . ."

If we recall the superstitious terror and abhorrence which the "gallows-tree" inspired in mediæval days, we will see the force and the temerity of Janov's comparison.

As was inevitable, the authorities of the church again began to take proceedings against him. In 1392, Matthew was ordered to deliver up to the vicar of the archbishop for inspection two works which he was known to have written. We have, however, no account of the result of this examination. It was a more serious matter when, in the autumn of the same year, Janov was again summoned to appear at the archiepiscopal law court. It appears probable that Archbishop Jenzenstein had, in consequence of the contents of the books mentioned above, again forbidden him to officiate as a priest at Prague, and particularly to administer the sacrament daily to laymen. On the formal promise of Matthew that he would henceforth obey all orders of his ecclesiastical superiors, he was now reinstated in all his dignities as a priest and preacher at Prague.

Probably, previous to his second appearance at the archiepiscopal court, Matthew's mind had undergone a profound change, of which he has given us an account that has great

[1] This eloquent passage (in *Regulae*, Book V.) is too long for quotation in its entirety.

psychological interest. It has already been mentioned that he had, like most priests of his time, unhesitatingly availed himself of the chance of gaining a livelihood by means of a papal benefice, the only course often open to an impecunious young priest. It did not even apparently appear to him wrong to conform to a then established custom. On Matthew's return to Prague, where he had, as already mentioned, at first obtained ecclesiastical dignities, but no regular income, a great change came over him. He had hitherto been very ambitious, and there is no doubt that as a subtle theologian and profound philosopher he might, under other circumstances, have ranked high among the writers of the fourteenth century.[1] But he now cast from him all worldly thoughts and ambitions. In his own words:[2] "As long as the 'thick wall' of desire for riches and worldly fame surrounded me and obscured the atmosphere, up to that time as a prisoner or a drunkard, I reposed softly. My only endeavour was to dwell splendidly 'in painted tents,' and as one who dwelleth in an inn, I reflected and thought of nothing but that which attracts the eyes and rejoices the ears. This lasted till it pleased the Lord Jesus to snatch me away from these walls, as a burning brand plucked out of the fire. . . . And the Lord led me to the dwelling of sorrow, adversity, shame, and contempt. Now, only when I had become poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembled at the word of the Lord,[3] I began to wonder at the truths of holy Scripture, and how they have been necessarily, irrevocably and continually fulfilled in the whole and in all parts. Then also I began at last to wonder at the great artfulness of Satan, who with his thick darkness has surrounded the bodies and covered up the eyes even of great philosophers.[4] Then particularly the

[1] It is beyond the purpose of this work to enter into this subject. I must refer the reader to Dr. Kybal's brilliant study.

[2] Kybal, *Matej z. Janova*, pp. 27-28.

[3] Isaiah, lxvi. 2.

[4] *i.e.*, of the University of Paris (note of Dr. Kybal).

dearest crucified Jesus opened my mind that I might understand the passages of Scripture that were befitting to the times, and He raised up my spirit that I might perceive how the people were absorbed by vanity. . . . And reading, I clearly and rightly understood the abomination of desolation which penetrated the holy spot, strongly, broadly, and widely. And I was much frightened, and I was seized with sobbing, which continueth now and for ever. And I began to repeat the complaint of Jeremiah, calling on all to lament over the crimes of Jerusalem, the daughter of his nation. Then there entered into my breast a certain fire, even bodily perceivable, new, strong, strange, but very sweet. This fire endures within me up to now, and the stronger it burns the more am I in my prayers raised up to God and to the Lord Jesus the Crucified; it (the fire) never disappears except when I forget Jesus Christ, or speak vainly, or become lax in the discipline of eating and drinking (*i.e.*, in fasting). Then am I immediately obscured perceivably, and become useless for all good works till I again turn to Jesus Christ with much groaning and many lamentations. . . . When I tremble before the judgment-seat of Christ, who so soon casts men into the hell of condemnation and again leads them back into the state of grace, then this fire returns to me and surrounds anew my inner man, so that I am prepared for everything that is good. And then I receive this suggestion which is written down and runs thus: 'Son of man, pierce the wall.' And I obeyed the voice of my God and I pierced the wall in a threefold fashion, that is by preaching daily to the people, by constantly hearing confessions and by writing this [1] (book) with much solicitude both by day and by night."

It is obvious through this self-confession that it was by means of the humiliations and tribulations of his troublous life that Matthew was led to renounce the ambitions of his youth, and even to denounce strongly the corrupt system of

[1] *i.e.* the *Regulae*.

the papal administration of that time. That a man who believed himself to be acting under the immediate inspiration of God should little heed the commands of his archbishop was inevitable. Matthew continued both in word and in writing to attack the immorality of the clergy and the idolatrous worship of images. He also extolled the frequent communion of laymen, as he had done before, and administered the sacrament daily to all the faithful who desired it. Yet we have no knowledge of any further conflict between the archbishop and Janov after the one that took place in 1392. Archbishop Jenzenstein was entirely engrossed in a violent dispute with King Venceslas IV. of Bohemia, and in 1394 Matthew of Janov passed away from the jurisdiction of all earthly judges; he died on November 30 of that year.

It has already been mentioned that Janov was a very fertile writer. It will here, however, be sufficient to refer to his *Regulae Veteris et Novi Testamenti*. The book was his masterpiece and his life-work, and we meet in it with all Matthew's predominant ideas and theories. The book, one of the most precious documents of the Bohemian reformation, long remained almost unknown, hidden away in various manuscripts, not one of which contained its complete contents. Dr. Kybal, the author of a valuable life of Matthew of Janov, to which I have frequently referred, is now engaged in editing and publishing the *Regulae*, and part of the work has already appeared. Matthew himself is our authority with regard to the origin of the *Regulae*. He had at first intended to treat his subject in but one book, but then added two more, and later on a fourth and fifth.[1] Here, as so frequently, Janov

[1] "Illum enim principaliter, id est solum illum primum intendebam sub brevitate scripsisse. Dehinc pius Jhesus michi dilatavit, et aperiens ostium me implevit suis copiis, ut duos libros, puta secundum et tercium scripserim, de indicio et discrecione verorum et falsorum christianorum et prisnum pseudoprophetarum et doctorum. Dehinc alios duos libros, scilicet quartum et quintum solum et simpliciter de communicacione in Christi Jhesu ecclesia deifici et supertremendi veri corporis et sanguinis Jhesu." *Regulae Proemium*, p. 16 of Dr. Kybal's edition.

believed himself to be writing under the direct inspiration of Jesus, by whose order he, as he tells us, extended his work. In the introduction (*proemium*) quoted below, which Matthew probably wrote after the completion of his work, he indicates the two leading ideas which inspired his book and to which he ever returns from the by-paths of scholastic philosophy, whose redundancy and frequent repetitions render the study of Matthew's work an arduous task. These two "Leitmotive" are the definition of true Christianity in distinction from false Christianity and the theory of the utility of the frequent communion of laymen. It had been customary with writers anterior to Dr. Kybal to dwell mainly on the first of these two points, and the *Regulae* were frequently described as the book of true and false Christianity. Dr. Kybal first pointed out the great importance which Janov attaches to the veneration of the sacrament and the great stress which he lays on the frequent communion of laymen. From this theory indirectly, and by no means through the direct influence of Janov, the doctrine of utraquism sprang.

To notice briefly the contents of the *Regulae*, it may be stated that the first book which follows on the introduction deals of the distinction between true and false prophets according to the Old Testament, and the veneration of the holy sacrament.[1] Conformably to its twofold subject, the book is divided into two *tractatus* (treatises). In the first of these Matthew warns his readers against false prophets (*pseudoprophetae*), who, he states, are more numerous than true prophets.[2] He then endeavours to instruct the faithful as to the means by which they can distinguish them. The second treatise, which deals of the sacrament of the altar

[1] The titles of the different books and treatises are different in the various manuscripts of the *Regulae*. In Dr. Kybal's edition the first book is entitled: *De Discrecione Spirituum in Doctoribus et Prophetis et de Venerabili Sacramento.*

[2] "Ex hoc contigit quod multi pseudoprophete exierunt in mundum, similiter et prophete veraces, licet pauciores." *Regulae*, p. 21 of Dr. Kybal's edition.

and communion, is one of the most valuable parts of Janov's great work. He has here expressed most fully and most clearly his views on the all-important subject of the sacrament, to which he refers very frequently in the *Regulae*. "In these days," Janov writes,[1] "some dispute on the frequent receiving of the body and blood of Jesus Christ by laymen; among these are preachers also and doctors who have expressed their views, some in favour, others in opposition to this practice, basing their opinions either on reasoning or on the Scriptures." Janov then proceeds in the usual scholastic fashion, abounding in "distinctions" and classifications, to place before his readers, and then to refute, the arguments of those who were opposed to frequent communion. He strongly blames the priests who, from haughtiness, refused to administer the sacrament frequently to laymen, though David called it the "nourishment of the poor," meaning hereby the laymen in distinction from the priesthood. Not only to men should frequent communion be allowed, but also to women, whose religious fervour Matthew greatly extolls.[2] The great part played by women in the Hussite movement has not yet been sufficiently noticed, and we only occasionally find—as here—some mention of it in the scanty records of the period that have been preserved. Later on the Bohemian women were on Zizka's hill to seal with their blood their devotion to the Hussite cause.

The second book of the *Regulae* also contained two treatises. The first one is entitled, *De Hypocrisi*, and Matthew here

[1] *Regulae*, p. 51.

[2] We meet with this praise of the religious fervour of women frequently in this treatise: "Puta quod mulieres que sunt in Christo in hoc tempore viros in virtutibus anticurrunt." . . . "Nam cum sacerdotes stertunt et nauseant vix debito et officio et alias raro missas sanctissimas dignati celebrare mulieres summis desiderüs et studüs festinant cottidie vel quanto eis saepius potest fieri, corpus et sanguinem Jhesu Christi manducare et potare." . . . "Istis temporibus surgunt mulieres virgines et vidue et apprehendunt disciplinam, agunt strenue penitentiam properant ad divina sacramenta et preripiunt viris regnum celorum circa vanitatem hujus seculi occupatis." (*Regulae*, Lib. I., tr. 2, *passim*.)

expresses himself strongly on the subject of hypocrites, particularly among the priesthood. He draws attention to the insufficiency of the precautions taken by the church to guard against such men, while it is always prepared to be watchful of heretics.[1] The second treatise, which formed part of this book, has not been preserved, though we are acquainted with its name, *De Distincta Veritate*.

In the third book, which contains no less than six treatises, Matthew can be said to have formulated his views most clearly. The book shows evidence of the fact that the different books of the *Regulae* were written separately and at different times, though Janov afterwards united them into one entirety. The third book, and indeed all parts of the *Regulae*, therefore, teem with repetitions, and the writer who endeavours to briefly delineate the contents of the work constantly runs the risk of committing the same offence. In the first treatise Matthew expounds a tenet which is the foundation of all his teaching. Jesus Christ himself, he writes, is the primary principle of truth, and the only sufficient guidance and law of Christian life. The second treatise, *De Testibus Veritates*, refers to the prophets and apostles as the witnesses of truth; and in the third, Matthew again broaches his views concerning the necessity of frequent communion. He quotes numerous witnesses, beginning by Jesus Christ and ending by contemporaries such as Adalbert Ranco, in support of his favourite doctrine. The fourth treatise, *On the Unity and Universality of the Church*, criticises bitterly the depraved state of the church at the time of Janov. The idea, outlined in this treatise, that the evil state of the church foreshadows the end of the world and the appearance of Antichrist, is fully developed in the fifth treatise, *De Antichristo*. As Matthew

[1] " Competenter vigilatur contra hereticos et vigilatum est dudum copiose per doctores; tamen contra nocentissimos ypocritas et luciformes (diabolical) non puto esse satis attentos usque modo christianos dei neque satis vigilare. (*Regulae*, p. 109.)

himself tells us,[1] it was the influence of Milic, who had dealt with the same subject, that induced Matthew to write his treatise. It differs little from the many other eschatological works written in Bohemia at this period. This treatise, which was long attributed to Hus and figures in the older editions of his work, obtained more celebrity than any other work of Janov, and was translated both into German and into Bohemian. It contains, in numerous "distinctions," a mystic description of Antichrist. The sixth and last treatise has great interest with regard to the development of the Hussite movement. It is entitled *De Abominacione in Loco Sancto*, and, to borrow the words of Dr. Kybal, is full of general and impassioned attacks on the ecclesiastical community of his day, founded on the language of the Old Testament and of the Revelation. Perhaps fearing that the vehemence of his attacks might be attributed to personal motives, Matthew here lays particular stress on the point that it was only his love of Christ that induced him to write.[2]

The fourth book of the *Regulae* contains but one treatise, which is entitled *A Question whether it is permissible to each and all holy Christians to receive Communion daily, that is to say, to partake of* (*manducare*) *the Body and Blood of Christ.* Matthew here again enters on a subject which obviously interested him more than any other. This treatise takes the form of an answer given by Matthew to a friend, a pious priest who was troubled by the question of frequent communion that then occupied all thoughtful minds in Bohemia. Matthew here, as elsewhere, appears as a staunch upholder of frequent communion.[3] He vigorously attacks those priests

[1] Dr. Kybal, *Matej z. Janova*, p. 63, n. 3.

[2] "Nam et ista scribens fateor quod nihil aliud me in illud perurget nisi dileccio domini nostri Jesu Crucifixi cujus stigmata pro modulo mee infirmitatis vilitatis in me ipso cupio deportare et quia igitur zelus domus sue comedit et opprobria exprobancium Jesu crucifixo ceciderunt super me, ideo ista loquor et scribo." (*Regulae*, quoted by Dr. Kybal, *Matej z Janova.*)

[3] . . . "meipsum adhoc obtuli et distinavi in Christo Jesu ut sim promotor et propugnator crebre communionis corporis et sanguinis domini Jesu Christi. . . ." (Kybal, *Matej z. Janova*, p. 72, n. 3.)

who hold laymen in contempt, calling beasts and ribalds those poor plebeians who wish to communicate frequently.[1] The monks in particular, he writes, endeavour, impelled by spiritual pride and hatred, to prevent laymen from receiving the sacrament frequently.

Very similar to that of the fourth is the subject of the fifth book of the *Regulae*, which is entitled *De Corpore Christi*. In this treatise Matthew addresses a friend, a layman, who desired to frequently receive the sacrament, and had in consequence often been reproved by the priests. Matthew here repeats many of his previous arguments in favour of frequent communion.

It is not easy to form a general opinion of the character and the writings of Matthew of Janov. The brilliant work of Dr. Kybal, who has for the first time given us a thorough insight into the nature of Matthew, has, it can almost be said, rendered him yet more enigmatical. Janov will never obtain popular favour, as the silence of his contemporaries and immediate successors proves. The man was soon forgotten, though, as recent research has proved, his writings largely influenced the Hussite movement. The sympathy and veneration which the absolute simplicity, self-abnegation, enthusiasm, indomitable faith, tender kindness even to the most venomous enemies that characterise Hus have obtained for that great Bohemian, will never be awarded to Matthew of Janov. All the writings of Janov are tainted with bitterness, and they sometimes convey an impression of insincerity, though this ceases to be the case when Matthew writes—according to his belief,—under the mystical inspiration of Jesus Christ. Matthew's repeated renunciations of opinions which he continued to hold strengthen this impression, and it is impossible,

[1] " Hü sunt qui ferme quemlibet de plebe dedignantur, bestias et ribaldos pauperes plebeios audacter nuncupando. . . . Habent de more quidem hujusmodi stomachari ad frequenter sacramento communicantes: " Isti Reghardi et Begynejam nituntur sacerdotibus simulari. Quis dyabolus ad hoc eas consecravit (Kybal, *Matej z. Janova*, p. 224, n. 2). Here as everywhere I have used Janov's own spelling as transcribed by Dr. Kybal from the manuscripts.

when reading his eloquent denunciations of the grasping extortions of the papal see, not to remember that he also had availed himself of the advantages which resulted from the system of papal benefices. It must indeed be admitted that this was no exceptional deed on the part of Matthew, and that he was driven to it by sheer want of means. Perhaps "his poverty but not his will consented." Both the life and the writings of Janov teem with contradictions. As Dr. Kybal has truly said of his works, we find in them entire submission to the church, and on the other hand haughty self-confidence and audacious criticism of the ecclesiastical system, sometimes timidity, sometimes the free expression of extreme views, sometimes consciousness of the importance of the hierarchy, of which Matthew himself formed part, and conservative views, at other times openly expressed popular and democratic opinions. Such a man could never be revered by the people as were Milic and Hus.

Yet it would be very erroneous to underrate the importance of Matthew in connection with the Hussite movement. He was by far the most learned of the forerunners of Hus, and as a thorough scholarly theologian he greatly influenced the masters of the University of Prague, who by the vicissitudes of civil war became, soon after the death of Hus, the supreme arbitrators on religious matters in Bohemia. Chief among the pupils of Janov was Master Jacobellus of Stribro, the originator of utraquism. Jacobellus entirely adopted Janov's views regarding the advent of Antichrist, and he has in his work on that subject incorporated large parts of Janov's treatise, though, as was then frequently done, he omitted to mention the name of the writer from whom he borrowed.[1] It was formerly also believed that Jacobellus derived from Janov his doctrine of utraquism or communion in the two kinds.

[1] Dr. Kybal has published an interesting article on the connection between Matthew of Janov and Jacobellus of Stribro in the *Cesky Casopis Historicky* (*Bohemian Historical Review*, vol. xi.).

The utraquist archbishop of Prague, John of Rokycan, maintained at the council of Basel that Matthew of Janov had first taught in Bohemia the doctrine of utraquism whose emblem, the chalice, became so distinctive a feature in the Hussite wars. Recent research has proved to a certainty that Janov never taught or preached utraquism.[1] He, however, always insisted on the right of laymen to receive communion frequently, and maintained that through the sacrament a mystical union is established between God and the worthy communicant. This supreme favour and grace should not, Matthew declared, be reserved to priests, but should be granted to laymen also. Saintly laymen, he maintains. have the right to receive communion as frequently as priests, Dr. Kybal has first pointed out how close the connection is between the principle of the frequent communion of laymen, as maintained by Janov, and the utraquism of the Hussites of the fifteenth century. Both claims were founded on a democratic basis and were protests against the theory of the inferiority of laymen which priests — and often the most unworthy priests—were maintaining in Bohemia at this period.

[1] This has been principally proved by Dr. Kalousik in his erudite treatise, *O Historii Kalicha v. dobach predhusitskych* (On the history of the chalice in pre-Hussite times).

## CHAPTER III

### THE YOUTH OF HUS

THE German writers have of late years endeavoured to establish a theory regarding the problems that confront the historian when he attempts to define to what extent general conditions and to what extent the acts of individuals should be considered in history. In other words, the historian should inquire to what extent events occurred in consequence of the social condition, the geographical situation, and the political position of a country, and to what extent the personality of one great and representative man influenced the course of history. If we attempt to solve this problem in connection with Hus, we undoubtedly find that his individuality was largely the cause of the momentous events which have rendered his name famous. Before Hus's time Milic had been a saintly enthusiast and a vigorous denouncer of the sins and corruption of the times. Matthew of Janov, one of the most learned theologians of the period, had energetically attacked the evil rule of Rome which the schism had rendered yet more scandalous, and he had spoken strongly against the idolatrous veneration of pictures and statues. Hus alone possessed the qualities of a great popular leader. His absolute self-renouncement, the indomitable courage with which he met moral and physical pain of every description for the cause which he firmly believed to be that of God, his enthusiastic devotion to the Slavic and particularly to the Bohemian race, his striking and popular eloquence—all combined to make him the idol of the Bohemian people, whose greatest representative in the world's story he remains.

If we endeavour to ascertain how great our knowledge of the events of the life of Hus is, we meet with a great contrast. While we have numerous and varied accounts of his later life —the events during his imprisonment can be traced almost day by day—very little is known of the early life of the great Bohemian church-reformer. The almost entirely absent contemporary records are replaced by later legends which are mostly attributable to members of the community of the Bohemian brethren, who believed themselves to have most purely preserved the teaching of Hus. Many of these legends are touching and not devoid of historical value. We are mainly indebted to the careful studies recently published by Professor Flajshans, the greatest authority on Hus of the present day, for whatever knowledge of the youth and early education of Hus we possess.

We are unable to state positively in what year Hus was born. The oldest traditions stated that he was born on July 6, 1373. More recently such great authorities as Palacky and Tomek gave July 6, 1369, as the date of the birth of Hus. According to the latest researches the exact year of his birth cannot be affirmed, but it undoubtedly took place in the period between 1373 and 1375. The day is quite uncertain. The tradition that Hus was born on July 6 is merely founded on a fanciful analogy with the day of his death, which occurred on July 6.

John Hus, or, "of Husinec," was born in the village of Husinec near the small town of Prachatice, which is not far from the frontiers of Bavaria. This fact deserves notice, as the racial strife which is the keynote of Bohemian history at all periods has always raged most fiercely in those districts where the domains of the Bohemian and German language meet. Husinec and the surrounding district lie on the line of delimitation of the two languages, the *Sprachengrenze* as it is called in German.

Hus's father was called Michael, and as it then was

customary in Bohemia to describe men only by their Christian name and that of their father, young Hus was first known as John son of Michael (Jan Michaluv, in Bohemian). At Prague he was inscribed in the books of the university in accordance with the name of his native village as John of Husinec. Only after the year 1398 we meet with the signature of "John Hus" or sometimes "John Hus of Husinec." After the year 1400 the church-reformer always signs himself simply as "John Hus," though he is in official documents often described as "Magister Johannes, dictus Hus de Husinec." The parents of Hus were peasants who possessed but scanty means, but endeavoured as far as they were able to give a good education to young John, who was his mother's favourite son. John Hus had several brothers, of whom, however, nothing is known.[1]

It is probable that Hus received his first education at the school of the town of Prachatice near Husinec, though here as elsewhere great uncertainty prevails with regard to the earliest events in the life of Hus. His mother is stated to have generally accompanied him when he walked to Prachatice, and an ancient legend tells us that when he was returning from school one day a sudden storm obliged him to seek refuge under a rock. His mother joined him there, and almost immediately afterwards lightning struck a juniper bush close by and set fire to it. Hus's mother said that they must immediately return home, but young John answered, "You will see that I also, like this bush, shall depart from this world in flames." [2]

It would be very tempting to refer in more detail to the picturesque legends that are connected with the youth of Hus, but they would not, perhaps, have for English readers the same

[1] The fact that John Hus had brothers is only proved by a passage in one of his letters written from Constance to his disciple Martin, in which he says: "Recommendo tibi fratres meos; carissime fac sicut scis ad illos." (Palacky, *Documenta Mag. Joannis Hus*, p. 120.)

[2] Flajshans, *Mistr Jan Hus*.

interest that they have for Hus's countrymen. At an early age, probably about the year 1389, young Hus proceeded to Prague to pursue his studies at the university there. That university is henceforth closely connected with the life of Hus, as it was indeed with the whole history of Bohemia at this period. The Emperor Charles, King of Bohemia, founded the University of Prague in 1348. As a contemporary chronicler writes,[1] Charles, " inflamed by love of God and impelled by his strong affection for his neighbours, wishing to benefit the commonwealth and laudably to exalt his Bohemian kingdom," obtained from the apostolic see the permission to establish a university (*studium*) at Prague. Charles, always a great admirer of France, where he had been educated and where, according to an ancient tradition, he had studied at the University of Paris, largely modelled the regulations of his new university on those that were then in force in Paris. As in Paris, the new university formed an independent community which enjoyed complete autonomy both with regard to civil and ecclesiastical matters. At the head of the university was a rector chosen twice annually by the members of the university, scholars as well as masters—a point that deserves notice, as Prague herein differed from Paris. The rector exercised very extensive powers over the members of the university, whom he could sentence to fines, imprisonment, and corporal punishment.

At the foundation of the university Charles had erected no special buildings for the purposes of study. The masters generally lectured in their own dwelling-places or at the monasteries to which they belonged.[2] Gradually, however, colleges sprang up on lines not dissimilar from those of the

[1] *Chronicon Benessii de Weilmil*, edited by Emler, p. 517.

[2] See Tomek, *Deje University Prazské* (History of the University of Prague) and the same author's *Dejepis Mesta Prahy* (History of the Town of Prague), vol. iii., also Dr. S. Winter, *O zivote na vysokych skolach Prazskych* (Life at the High Schools of Prague), and the same author's *Deje vysokych skol Prazskych* (History of the High Schools of Prague).

Sorbonne in Paris. Charles himself founded the Carolinum, and shortly afterwards colleges, some intended only for the masters, others for scholars, also were established. Charles's son and successor, Venceslas, followed in the footsteps of his father and founded a college in the Ovocny trh (fruit-market) which bore his name and for a time counted Hus among its inmates.

When founding the University of Prague Charles had distinctly stated that he had founded the new establishment mainly for the purpose that the Bohemians might be able to pursue higher studies in their own country without undertaking journeys to distant cities such as Paris, Oxford, or Bologna; only as a secondary motive was the hope expressed that in consequence of the new foundation many foreign students would be attracted to Prague, which Charles had just greatly enlarged by building the "new town." It was, therefore, undoubtedly in accordance with the wishes of the king that the new university had at first a national character. Thus, among the earliest teachers there, we find the names of John Moravec, Albert Bluduv, John of Dambach, Bohemians by birth, who had been educated at foreign universities. We do not find a single German name among these earliest teachers. It can therefore be said that the University of Prague was originally Bohemian, though Latin was the language in which instruction was given.[1] During the reign of Venceslas matters changed, and at the time of the arrival of Hus at Prague the Germans had obtained almost complete control over the university.

The University of Prague was, almost from its beginning, divided into "nations," as was customary in Paris and Bologna. The Bohemian nation included besides the students from Bohemia and the county of Glatz—then part of the country—those who belonged to Moravia, Hungary, and the

[1] Tadra, *Kulturni Styky Cechs cizinou* (Cultural Connection of Bohemia with Foreign Countries), *passim*, particularly pp. 288-289.

southern Slavic countries. The Bavarian nation comprised the students from the Bavarian principalities as well as those from Austria, Suabia, Franconia, and the Rhinelands. The students from Saxony, Meissen, and Thuringia, with those from Sweden and Denmark, formed the Saxon nation. The Polish nation was composed of Poles, Russians, Lithuanians, and Silesians. Since the foundation of the University of Cracow in 1364, the majority of the members of this nation was German. The division into nations—contrary to the practice of Paris—at Prague extended to the masters also. This, according to the views of a recent learned writer,[1] largely contributed to envenom the national dissensions at the university.

The new university—the first one founded in central Europe—immediately attracted large crowds of students from all parts of Europe. The contemporary chronicler, Benes of Weitmil, writes: "The university became so great that nothing equal to it existed in Germany, and students came there from all parts of the world—from England, France. Lombardy, and Poland, and all the surrounding countries, sons of nobles and princes, and prelates of the church from all parts of the world." The students were not all, as at the present day, men in early youth. The "faculty" of the jurists in particular, which for a time formed a separate body, contained many men of maturer age. Many wealthy men, often accompanied by numerous servants, also came to Prague, more for the purpose of enjoying the pleasures of the capital than for the purpose of study. This vast crowd of students added greatly to the population of Prague, and contributed greatly to enrich the citizens. The latter were not, however, always pleased with this great immigration. Among the students were many turbulent and riotous men, Street brawls and even fights were frequent. Prague had somewhat the appearance of Paris at the time of Villon. The

[1] Denifle, quoted by Winter, *Deje vysokych skol Prazskych.*

rector and beadles often proved unable to maintain order, and in 1374 the authorities of the university came to an agreement with those of the city, according to which the city-guards were empowered to arrest and hand over to the custody of the rector turbulent and riotous students. Other complaints also were made against the members of the new university. It was stated that they were followed everywhere by numerous undesirable female companions.[1] It must, however, be stated in defence of the students that the example given them by the clergy of Prague was not a very edifying one.

It was for this turbulent and sensuous capital that the youthful south Bohemian peasant John left the quiet of his native Husinec. Of his early student-days we possess somewhat touching reminiscences, which are scattered throughout his writings. It is a peculiarity of Hus that he always writes of his actions with a truly saintly humility, exaggerating in an almost childlike fashion every little misdeed, or what he considered as such. He, on the other hand, always takes much trouble to conceal the strenuous work and bitter self-renunciation which were the principal features of his student-life at Prague. In a spirit that almost appears inspired by personal animosity, recent German writers have laid great stress on Hus's very innocent confessions. The son of poor parents, Hus endured the sufferings of poverty and even of hunger,[2] and was often obliged to sleep on the bare ground and even reduced to begging in the streets—not, it

[1] The parishioners of St. Nicholas in the old town declared: "Quod multae domus sunt in parochia ipsorum et aliis, ubi studentes morantur, et rara domus est in quibus morantur in qua non foverent meretrices publicas, de quo multi homines scandalizantur." Quoted by Tomek, *Dejepis Mesta Prahy*, vol. iii. p. 284, n.

[2] Hus refers in his quaint manner to this time when his only food consisted of a scant pittance of bread and peas. "As I," he writes, "when I was a hungry little student, made a spoon out of bread till I had eaten the peas, and then I ate the spoon also." *Vyklad desatera bozieho prikazanie* (Exposition of the Ten Commandments), chap. lxxvii. p. 278, of Erben's edition.

must be remembered, a very exceptional occurrence for a mediæval student at a time when the fame of the mendicant orders was at its height. Hus also endeavoured, as he tells us, to add to his scanty means by acting as singing boy and ministrant at religious services. He appears to have taken part in the rough games of his fellow-students, though at the university he always bore an excellent character. Always a severe judge of himself, he confessed at a later period that he had been very fond of playing chess, and had even won money at that game. The life of Hus became somewhat less hard when he obtained admission to the college which King Venceslas had recently founded in the fruit-market. Hus had come to Prague to study theology, then almost the only career for an impecunious, but intelligent and studious young man. In his usual quaintly humorous manner he tells that he rejoiced in the thought of becoming a priest, as he would then have a good dwelling-place and clothing and be esteemed by the people. It would be unnecessary to state—had not the detractors of Hus expressed a contrary opinion—that this casual remark by no means proves that Hus had not from his youth a strong religious vocation and a strong inclination to theological studies. That he soon became famed for his piety in Prague is proved by a legend that is told of his student-days. It was related that Hus had, when reading the legend of St. Lawrence, asked himself whether he also would be able to suffer such pain for the sake of Christ. He immediately placed his hand on the fire in the coal-pan, and firmly held it there till one of his companions drew it away. Hus, we are told, then said: "Why dost thou fear so small a matter? I only wished to test whether I should have sufficient courage to bear but a small part of that pain which St. Lawrence endured."

That Hus pursued his theological studies with energy and perseverance is proved by his rapid progress at the university. He would, there is little doubt, have become a theologian of

the highest rank had his life been longer and less troubled. In his early university days Hus was not only a firm adherent of the Catholic Church—he indeed always continued to consider himself as such—but he even followed superstitious practices of the Roman Church which he afterwards condemned. When, in 1393, a year of jubilee was announced at Prague, and letters of indulgence remitting sins were publicly sold at the Vysehrad, Hus was among those who availed themselves of this privilege and, as he himself tells us, spent his few remaining coins in purchasing these supposed celestial favours. Other men, however, who were older than Hus at this period, already viewed with great displeasure this traffic in holy things, and when, in 1412, indulgences were again sold at Prague to defray the expenses of the war which Pope John XXIII. was waging against the King of Naples, many were mindful of the scandals caused by the sale of indulgences in 1393.

The University of Prague was at that time at the height of its fame, and Hus had the privilege of hearing the sermons and lectures of many eminent men. Among them was Adalbert Ranco, who has already been mentioned, and whose strongly anti-papal views may not have been without influence on the young student. One of Hus's teachers also was the famed preacher, John of Stekna, whose sermons in the Bethlehem chapel induced Hus to seek indulgences at the Vysehrad, and whom he, referring to his eloquence, compares to a "sonorous trumpet."[1] We have on the whole but scanty information concerning Hus during his stay at the college in the fruit-market. Among his fellow-students were some men with whom he was again associated later in life. Such men were Jerome of Prague, a man somewhat younger than Hus, and Jacob of Stribro, commonly known as Jacobellus, because of his diminutive size, who was the real originator of utraquism. The fates were to be more gracious to Jacobellus

[1] Hus, *Opera* (Nuremberg ed., 1715), vol. ii. p. 65.

than to his companions, for while Hus and Jerome perished in the flames, Jacobellus died peacefully at Prague in 1429 as honoured leader of the utraquist or Hussite church.

The plan of studies pursued by young Hus at the university was that usually followed by youthful students of theology at mediæval universities. Dr. Flajshans has in his valuable work on Hus given an interesting account of these studies, referring specially to the customs peculiar to the university of Prague. Great importance was attached to theological disputations, in which the subtlety of scholastic distinctions and definitions found full play. Hus appears to have shown great aptitude for the exercises, and this no doubt accounts for the skill and acuteness which he afterwards displayed at Constance, when confronted with the most learned and most subtle theologians of Europe. In 1393, at an unusually early age, Hus obtained the first of academic honours, that of bachelor of arts. Together with him, several companions, among them Jacobellus, went through the ordeal of the previous examinations, which took place in the large hall of the Carolinum, the college founded by Charles. Probably shortly afterwards the Archbishop John of Jenzenstein conferred on Hus the minor orders, though it appears that he was only ordained as a priest considerably later. He continued meanwhile to pursue successfully his academic career. In 1394 he became a bachelor of divinity, and in 1396 a master of arts. In 1402 he became, at an unusually early age, for the first time rector of the university. It was probably in 1400 that Hus was ordained a priest, but as Dr. Lechler has noted, Hus, like Melanchthon, who played so great a part in the German reformation, never obtained the degree of doctor of divinity. Though Hus had from the first been noted for his piety, his religious enthusiasm, as he has told us, and contemporary writers confirm, became yet greater after he had been ordained. Though Hus, whose home was in the frontier districts where the struggle between Slav and Teuton is always fiercest, no

doubt from his earliest youth was interested in this strife, it was also about this time that he began to brood more seriously over the wrongs of his country. In 1401 Bohemia was invaded by the German troops of the Margrave of Meissen, the ally of Rupert, Elector Palatine, whom the enemies of King Venceslas had elected King of the Romans. These troops ravaged Bohemia in a cruel manner—a fact to which Hus alludes in one of his earliest sermons, preached probably in 1401, in which he also incidentally expatiates on the inferior position which his countrymen occupied in their own country. "The Bohemians," he said, "are more wretched than dogs or snakes; for a dog defends the couch on which he lies, and if another dog tries to drive him away, he fights with him, and a snake does the same. But us the Germans oppress, seizing all the offices of state, while we are silent. Bohemians in the kingdom of Bohemia, according to all laws, indeed also according to the law of God and according to the natural order of things, should be foremost in all offices in the Bohemian kingdom; thus the French are so in the French kingdom, and the Germans in the German lands. Therefore should a Bohemian rule his own subordinates, and a German German (subordinates). But of what use would it be if a Bohemian, not knowing German, became a priest or a bishop in Germany? He assuredly would be as useful as a dumb dog who cannot bark is to a herd! And equally useless to us Bohemians is a German; and knowing that this (*i.e.* the rule of Germans over Bohemians) is against God's law and the regulations, I declare it to be illegal."

The great talents of Hus as a preacher appear to have been from the beginning recognised by his countrymen. In 1401 we already find him preaching at the church of St. Michael by permission of Bernard, a monk of the Zderaz monastery, who was the parish priest of St. Michael's. Though the monk Bernard was a strong opponent of church-reform, Hus was on terms of friendship with him and often dined at the parsonage.

Hus, as was always his custom, expressed his opinions freely, and many statements made by him here and at the house of another friend, "Venceslas the cup-maker," were in a distorted form brought forward as evidence against him many years later.[1] As Hus was then and continued many years afterwards to be on good terms with his ecclesiastical superiors, this circumstance appears an evil example of the tendency to eavesdropping and espionage of which the Bohemians are so often accused by their enemies.

It was due to the great fame of Hus as a preacher that he obtained in 1402 the important appointment of preacher at the Bethlehem chapel. This foundation is so closely connected with Hus and the Hussite movement that it deserves notice here. The foundation was undoubtedly an offshoot of Milic's reform movement, and it is, as Dr. Tomek writes, somewhat strange that such a foundation should have been permitted by the ecclesiastical authorities at a time when the Archbishop of Prague was persecuting the followers of Milic. The founder of Bethlehem was John or Hanus of Millheim, of whom too little is known. We only read that he was one of the favourite courtiers of King Venceslas IV. and that he was, judging by his name, not a Bohemian by birth. He appears to have been owner of considerable estates—among others, of that of Pardubice in north-eastern Bohemia, as well as of considerable house property in Prague. Through his wife, Anna Zajic of Hasenburg, he was connected with the ancient nobility of Bohemia. The year of his birth is uncertain, but we have documentary evidence to prove that he died before the year 1408. Associated with him in the foundation was the tradesman Kriz, a rich and patriotic citizen of Prague, who was very anxious to obtain for his fellow-citizens the privilege of hearing sermons in their native language. It was he who gave the building ground on the present Betlemské Namesti (Bethlehem Square), and he hoped, as events proved

[1] See Palacky, *Documenta*, *passim*, particularly pp. 174-185.

rightly, that his association with a powerful and influential noble would enable him to overcome the resistance which, during the period of reaction that followed the death of Milic, an enterprise founded on the lines of that church-reformer would necessarily encounter. The document drawn up by Millheim which established the Bethlehem foundation (dated May 24, 1391) indeed breathes entirely the spirit of Milic.[1] He states that, according to the teaching of the holy fathers, the word of God should not be fettered, but should be preached with the greatest freedom and in the manner most useful to the church and its members. Regret is then expressed that there was not as yet at Prague a place specially destined for preaching, and in particular none where sermons could be preached in the national language. Bohemian preachers were therefore generally obliged to seek shelter in houses or hiding-places. To obviate such evils in future Millheim decreed that the rector of the new foundation should be a secular priest whose duty it was to be to preach in Bohemian twice a day—in the morning and in the afternoon —on all Sundays and feast days, except during Advent and Lent, when he was only expected to preach in the morning. Relying on the support of his influential ally, the pious Kriz began building the Bethlehem chapel even before he had received the royal sanction of the foundation. Near the chapel Kriz built, also on the present Bethlehem Square, a modest dwelling for the priest who was to officiate in the chapel. The door of this modest house, sanctified to Bohemians by the fact that it was for a time inhabited by Hus, has been preserved, and is now indicated by an appropriate inscription. The Bethlehem chapel itself was entirely demolished by the Emperor Joseph II. of Austria in 1786.[2] It appears to have been a somewhat extensive building,

[1] Tomek, *History of the Town of Prague*, vol. iii. pp. 426-427.

[2] Not by the Jesuits as has been frequently stated; they had been expelled from the Austrian states several years previously.

deserving rather the name of a church than that of a chapel which it always retained. It is said to have been roomy enough to contain over a thousand people. Many ancient views of the famed Bethlehem chapel—Millheim had followed Milic in giving a Biblical name to his foundation—have still been preserved. The German historian Zacharias Theobaldus, who visited Prague in 1621, writes that he had at that time already found little in the Bethlehem chapel that was of historical interest.[1] He saw, however, a bench on which Hus had frequently sat and the pulpit from which he had preached. The latter had been greatly injured by the many pious travellers who had cut off and carried away chips from it.

The Bethlehem chapel, specially instituted for the purpose of preaching in the national language from its foundation, attracted great interest; the preachers there were renowned for their eloquence. The fame of the chapel, however, became yet much greater when Hus began to preach there. As had been the case with Milic, disciples now began to gather round Hus and formed a considerable part of his congregation. His following was not limited to men. Many pious Bohemian ladies soon began to occupy rooms near the Bethlehem chapel to be in the neighbourhood of the enthusiastic preacher. One of the first to do this was Anezka of Stitny, who has already been mentioned. Somewhat later, Cunegunda of Wartenberg, who shared the apartments of Anezka, Catherine Kaplir of Sulevic, and other noble Bohemian ladies found dwelling-places near the Bethlehem chapel, where Queen Sophia, the wife of King Venceslas, was also a frequent visitor. These ladies devoted themselves wholly to religious exercises and works of charity, forming an association similar to those of the Beguines, though they were not fettered by any rules or regulations. The important part played by women in the

[1] " Doch habe ich kein Antiquitet so zu diesem meinem proposito (*i.e.*, of studying the history of Hus and the Hussite wars) gehöret finden können." (*Zacharias Theobaldus Hussitenkrieg*, p. 28.)

Hussite movement has, as I have already remarked, been much overlooked by historians.

As so often occurs under similar circumstances, the members of the Bethlehem community gradually and perhaps unconsciously assumed an attitude of aloofness and apartness which could not fail to cause displeasure in the narrow atmosphere of a mediæval city. The followers of Hus specially incurred the dislike of the German inhabitants of Prague. Some of these men had indeed at first welcomed the teaching of Waldhauser and Milic, but at the beginning of the fifteenth century racial discord became more intense in Prague. The Bohemians were greatly irritated by the depredations and cruelties which the German soldiers, sent into the country by Venceslas's antagonist, Rupert of the Palatinate, committed. Hus shared the general feeling of his countrymen, and in a passage in one of his sermons that has already been quoted spoke strongly against the Germans. Though Hus always declared that he preferred a good German to a bad Bohemian, he also expressed himself strongly with regard to the attitude of the German members of the university who were suspected of favouring Rupert of the Palatinate. "The Germans," he writes,[1] "who are in Bohemia should go to their king (Venceslas) and swear that they will be faithful to him and to the country, but this will only come to pass when a serpent warms itself on the ice."[2] Another subject of national discord was the troublous state of affairs at the university. Though the foundation of German universities such as that of Vienna had considerably reduced the number of German students, their preponderance, founded on the artificial system of voting by "nations," still continued. It had indeed become even more onerous, for since the foundation of the University of Cracow the Germans had secured a majority in

[1] *Vyklad desatera bozieho prikazani* (Exposition of the Ten Commandments), chap. xxxviii. p. 100, of Erben's edition.

[2] A proverbial locution.

the Polish "nation" at Prague. A very vast amount of ecclesiastical patronage was in the gift of the university, and the youthful Bohemian students of theology, mostly penniless young men, naturally feared that they would have little hope of obtaining preferment from a university which was in the hands of the Germans. The great intellectual advance of the Bohemian nation at the beginning of the fifteenth century rendered it yet more sensitive to the slight which consisted in its exclusion from the most important offices of the church and the university. There is no doubt that in this matter also Hus was in sympathy with his countrymen. Certain concessions were indeed made. Thus, after prolonged discussion, an agreement was made in 1384, according to which, of the twelve collegiate seats at the Carolinum college, ten should always be conferred on Bohemians, while the other two should be open to them as well as to the members of the three other "nations." A similar rule was also established in the college of King Venceslas.[1] These slight concessions, which changed little in the general organisation of the university, may have deferred, but did not prevent the conflict that broke out at the time of Hus, and which will shortly be mentioned.

It is noteworthy that Hus was on good terms with his ecclesiastical superiors during the first years of his priesthood. His strong national feeling did not offend those members of the clergy who belonged to the ancient Bohemian nobility. The nobles of the country were, partly from a feeling of opposition to the German townsmen, generally friendly to the Bohemian people. It is also an error to state, as has frequently been done, that the acquaintance with the works of Wycliffe suddenly turned Hus from a devoted servant of the Church of Rome into a virulent enemy of that church. The only undoubted change in the nature of Hus was that which occurred at the time of his ordination as a priest. He aban-

[1] Tomek, *Deje University Prazské* (History of the University of Prague), p. 112.

doned at that time the very harmless frivolities in which he had previously indulged. Always a pious man, he now became a very fervent Christian and a very diligent student of theology. Hus's alienation from the Church of Rome was a gradual one, founded on personal experiences as well as on the study of books, Wycliffe's among others. The learned Dr. Schwab, in his *Johannes Gerson*, in which he incidentally gives an interesting account of the early studies of Hus, points out that he devoted much time to the study of the sentences of Peter Lombard [1] and of Gratian's *Decretum*. In the latter work Hus found many statements, such as that the primate had only been founded by the Emperor Constantine, and that equality had formerly existed between priests and bishops, which were entirely contrary to the teaching of the church in his time. Of Wycliffe's works, also, Hus was an enthusiastic student. The writings of the English divine had from their first appearance attracted great attention at the University of Prague. Hus studied them carefully and transferred to his own writings many ideas contained in them, though, as already mentioned, it is always necessary to inquire whether the views expressed by both writers are not derived from a common earlier source. It is a proof of the great interest in Wycliffe's writings which Hus showed at this period that we find among his earliest works a Bohemian translation of the *Trialogus* of the English divine.

It was also this interest in the works of Wycliffe which was the cause, or perhaps the pretext, of the first theological controversy in which Hus became involved. It was, however, as yet only the university and particularly its German magisters, not the Church of Rome, that attacked him. A German master of theology, John Hübner, in 1403 brought to the notice of the chapter of Prague—the archbishopric was

[1] Dr. J. B. Schwab, *Johannes Gerson*. That Hus had written an extensive commentary on the sentences of Peter Lombard—a fact that of course confirms Dr. Schwab's statement—was not known at the time his book appeared.

then vacant—twenty-one "articles" derived from the works of Wycliffe which he declared to be heretical. It should be remarked that Hübner's "articles"[1] contained many statements that were not derived from Wycliffe, as will be obvious to all who have even a slight acquaintance with the writings of the English divine. None the less these articles, as well as twenty-four others condemned by the synod of London, were by John Kbel and Venceslas of Bechin, canons of the chapter of Prague, brought to the notice of Walter Harasser, a German of the Bavarian "nation" who had just succeeded Hus as rector of the university. A general meeting of the members of the university, presided over by the rector, Walter Harasser, took place on May 28, 1403, in the great hall of the Carolinum college. The debate was a stormy one. Some of the masters who were acquainted with the writings of Wycliffe rightly declared that the articles attributed to him statements that he had never made. Master Nicholas of Litomysl addressed Hübner the informer in these words: "Thou hast falsely and unjustly drawn from these books (*i.e.* Wycliffe's) statements that are not contained in them." Hus exclaimed that the falsifiers should be executed, as were those who falsified victuals, alluding to the recent occurrence that two men had suffered the death-penalty for that offence. Stephen Palec, then an adherent of Hus, but one of those whom intimidation and even meaner reasons afterwards brought over to the Roman party, threw one of Wycliffe's books on the table and said to the assembled masters: "Let who will stand up and speak against any word contained in this book! I will defend it!" Several other masters spoke in the same sense. The majority of the assembly, however, was of a contrary opinion. A statement was drawn up and passed by majority declaring that "no one should teach, repeat, or affirm these articles either privately or publicly." To prevent the quarrel from becoming

[1] They are printed by Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 451-455. One of the statements attributed to Wycliffe runs thus: "Deus debet obedire diabolo."

yet more envenomed, no decree declaring the articles to be heretical was passed. Some years afterwards, at a meeting of the members of the Bohemian nation, who were almost all favourable to the cause of church-reform, the former judgment was attenuated. On the proposal of Hus it was declared that "no master or scholar of the Bohemian nation should defend the articles in any false, erroneous, or heretical sense." This restriction may be said to have rendered the whole prohibition illusory.

These academical discussions appear at this time to have attracted little attention beyond the precincts of the university. Public opinion in Prague became calmer after the election of a new archbishop. The choice fell on Zbynek Zajic of Hasenburg, a member of one of the oldest families of the Bohemian nobility. Though long nominally a priest, he had hitherto devoted himself exclusively to politics and to military matters. A very distinguished soldier, he did not endeavour to conceal his distaste—it was really perhaps contempt—for abstruse theological controversy. Zajic was on the whole a well-meaning man, who did not claim to be a scholar, but was far less illiterate than was stated by his opponents when he was very reluctantly dragged into the turmoil of theological controversy. Zajic, a man of common sense if not of learning, perceived that the real danger to the Bohemian church lay in the terrible immorality and dishonesty of the clergy. It also could not escape his notice that the accusation of holding heretical opinions was often levelled against virtuous and zealous priests by their less worthy colleagues. The exemplary life of Hus and the eloquence of which he had given proof in his sermons at the Bethlehem chapel attracted the attention of the new archbishop. Disregarding the attacks of which Hus had been the subject, Zbynek showed great favour to the pious and eloquent preacher. As Hus afterwards recalled to the archbishop's memory,[1] he ordered

[1] In a letter addressed by Hus to the archbishop in July 1408, he reminded

him, " whenever he noticed any irregularity with regard to the government of the church, to bring such irregularity to the archbishop's knowledge either in person or in case of absence by means of a letter." Honestly striving to improve the moral conduct of the clergy of his archbishopric, Zbynek determined on instituting frequent meetings or synods in which all matters of discipline could be discussed. He appointed Hus preacher to the synod. Some of his synodal sermons have been preserved, and it cannot be denied that in them he attacked the morals and general behaviour of the Bohemian priesthood in a very strong though doubtlessly justifiable manner. These attacks did not at this period deprive Hus of the favour of the archbishop, as will be shown presently when referring to the important mission that was entrusted to him. At court, also, Hus was now in favour. Though we can hardly believe that King Venceslas felt much interest in matters of theology, he undoubtedly, probably through the influence of his pious queen, Sophia, treated the eloquent preacher with kindness. In later days, also, he extended his protection to Hus even when by so doing he incurred the enmity of the Church of Rome and of his treacherous younger brother Sigismund. Queen Sophia had from the first shown favour to the young priest, John of Husinec, and was often present at his sermons in the Bethlehem chapel. Through her influence Hus became court chaplain, and the queen also appointed him her confessor.

In 1405 Archbishop Zbynek entrusted Hus—together with two other priests—with a mission that had considerable importance. At Wilsnack, a small town of Slavic origin, situated in the present Prussian province of Brandenburg, strange miracles were stated to have occurred. In a chapel there three bleeding holy wafers had been found, and it was

him that " in principio vestri regiminis mihi pro regula Pat. Vra. instituerat ut quotienscunque aliquem defectum erga regimen conspicerem, mox personaliter, aut in absentia per literam defectum hujusmodi nuntiarem." (Palacky, *Documenta*, p. 3.)

*From "Magnum Oecumenicum Constantiense Concilium."*
*by Hermanni von der Hardt.*

affirmed that those who invoked these remnants of the body and blood of Christ obtained miraculous results. A knight named Henry, who was to fight a duel with one Frederick, vowed before doing so that he would dedicate his armour to the Holy Blood of Wilsnack: he killed his adversary. One Peter, a robber and murderer, while confined in prison in fetters, also made a vow to the Holy Blood of Wilsnack. The result was that his fetters were miraculously broken and that he escaped. These and other similar tales were circulated widely all over Europe, and countless pilgrims from all countries—among them many Bohemians—flocked to Wilsnack. Hus and his colleagues questioned very diligently at Prague some of those who had visited the new place of pilgrimage. The evidence they collected is very curious as bearing witness not only to the superstition and credulity of the Middle Ages, but also to the unscrupulous dishonesty of the clergy of the period. Thus the evidence stated that a citizen of Prague, Peter of Ach, one of whose hands was maimed, had undertaken a pilgrimage to Wilsnack and dedicated a silver hand as an offering to the Holy Blood. Peter, however, failed to find relief. He remained three days at Wilsnack, wishing to hear what the priests would say of this. He then saw a priest who showed the silver hand from the pulpit, saying: "Listen, children, to this miracle. The hand of our neighbour from Prague has been healed by the Holy Blood, and he has offered this silver hand as a thanksgiving." Peter then rose, showed his maimed hand, and exclaimed: "Priest, thou liest; here is my hand maimed as it always was!" The result of the investigation, in the course of which many similar frauds were exposed, was that an archiepiscopal decree enjoined on all preachers in Bohemia the duty of informing the laymen in their sermons that pilgrimages to Wilsnack were prohibited. This prohibition was to be repeated on one Sunday of every month.

The deplorable result of this investigation, in which Hus

took a prominent part, and the equally repulsive facts that came to his knowledge in consequence of the supervision of the clergy with which the archbishop had entrusted him, rendered Hus yet more bitter when writing and speaking of the Bohemian priests. He thus drew on himself the undying hatred of many of the priests of Prague, particularly of those whose life was not irreproachable. It was, indeed, mainly on the testimony of such men that Hus was afterwards condemned at Constance.

Meanwhile the university and town of Prague had, partly in consequence of the revelations of Wilsnack, again become a hotbed of theological strife. The fact that the bleeding wafers had been misused in an obviously fraudulent manner led to a truly scholastic controversy on the substance of the blood of Christ. Hus took part in this controversy by means of two of his earliest Latin works, entitled respectively, *De Corpore Christi* and *De Sanguine Christi*. The last-named treatise refers directly to the investigation of the so-called miracles of Wilsnack, and was written by order of the archbishop. The older manuscripts mention that it was approved by the archbishop and the University of Prague, while the later ones, written after Hus had been cast off by the Roman Church, state that the treatise had been rejected by the archbishop and university.[1]

As has been frequently pointed out, the question of the sacrament was in Bohemia very closely connected with the pretensions of the priests whose privilege it was to administer it. Hus's attitude with regard to the pseudo-miracles of Wilsnack no doubt irritated yet further the clergy of Prague, already deeply offended by his outspokenness, and jealous of his success as a preacher. The contemporary chroniclers all attribute the troubles of Hus to the imprudence he showed in

[1] Flajshans *Literarni Cinnost Mistra Jana Husi* (Literary Activity of Master John Hus), pp. 67-70. Both these treatises are printed in the Nuremberg edition of the Latin works of Hus.

attacking the powerful priesthood. One of these writers states:[1] "It was commonly said that as long as he (Hus) preached against the lords, knights, and squires, the citizens and the artisans all praised him and felt kindly towards him. But when he attacked the clergy, the pope, and others of the ecclesiastical estate, then many deserted him." The Bohemian chroniclers write with a great deal of prejudice, and their statements must be received with caution. Yet this passage probably reflects the popular feeling at Prague at the time when the relations between Hus and the Roman Church began to become strained. It is, at any rate, certain that the enemies of Hus laid great stress on the losses that might befall the Bohemian priests in consequence of his teaching. Such arguments would also, it was hoped, detach from the cause of Hus Archbishop Zbynek, who continued to show great distaste for theological controversies. In 1408, shortly after the second discussion of the works of Wycliffe at the university which, as already mentioned, had ended by a compromise suggested by Hus, the clergy of Prague brought forward new accusations against him based rather on questions of conduct than of dogma. In a document[2] which they forwarded to the archbishop, they, after briefly referring to the previous discussion on the works of Wycliffe, declared that Hus had preached odious and scandalous sermons which had lacerated the minds of the pious, extinguished charity, and rendered the clergy odious to the people. It was further stated that Hus had in the Bethlehem chapel declared before a large congregation consisting both of men and women, "contrary to the regulations of the holy church and the teaching of the fathers," that all priests who claimed money from their parishioners as retribution for ecclesiastical functions, confession, communion, baptism, and others, were heretics. It was further stated that

[1] *Stari Letopisove cessti* (Ancient Bohemian Chronicles), edited by Palacky, vol. iii. p. 7.

[2] This important document is printed—together with Hus's reply—in Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 154-163.

Hus, while officiating at the funeral of Canon Peter Vserub, who had been a great pluralist, had declared that he would not accept as gift the whole world on the condition of dying possessed of so many benefices. Hus was lastly accused of having in his sermons generally strongly attacked the priests and lowered them in the estimation of the laymen. Hus replied in a lengthy and spirited letter to the archbishop, which is, unfortunately, not devoid of the scholastic hair-splitting then fashionable at the universities. Yet there is no doubt that Hus was entirely in the right, particularly when he laid stress on the baseness of extorting money from the poor as a condition of administering the sacraments to them. As Professor Tomek has truly written, such conduct proves to what a low level the clergy of Prague had sunk at this period. The learned professor has also pointed out that the conduct of the priests blamed by Hus was in direct contravention of the article 65 of the statute of Ernest, Archbishop of Prague, who had some time previously endeavoured to reform the Bohemian Church. Nevertheless, Archbishop Zbynek henceforth showed less favour to Hus, and soon after the complaint of the priests he deprived him of his office of preacher to the synod. It must be admitted that the conduct of Hus at this period was not conciliatory. Ever zealous for the reform of the Bohemian Church—this, not a change in the doctrine of the church, he considered the purpose of his life—Hus addressed to Archbishop Zbynek a letter which, as Dr. Lechler, a Protestant divine, has truly written, reaches the extreme limit of that which is permissible to a priest when writing to his ecclesiastical superior. In this letter Hus interceded for the priest Nicholas of Velenovic, surnamed Abraham. Abraham had preached at Prague without permission, and had been called to account by Canon John Kbel, one of the most strenuous opponents of church-reform. When questioned, Abraham did not deny the offence, but declared that he believed that not only priests, but laymen also, had the right to

preach. Thereupon Kbel called him a heretic, and caused him to be imprisoned, and afterwards exiled. This occurrence deeply affected Hus, particularly as Abraham was a man of blameless character. It has already been noted that—though there were many exceptions—it was generally among the worthy, zealous, and pious priests that the friends of church-reform were found. In interceding for Abraham, Hus vividly contrasted his life with that of other priests of Prague.[1] He ended his letter by admonishing the archbishop " to love the good, watch over those who are evil, not let the ostentatious and avaricious flatter him, favour the humble and friends of poverty, oblige the indolent to work and not hinder those who labour steadfastly at the harvest of the Lord." Relations between the archbishop and Hus became more and more strained, and a letter written at the end of the year 1408,[2] in which Hus defended his conduct and expressed himself in favour of neutrality between the rival pontiffs, closed the correspondence.

The end of the year 1408 is one of the principal landmarks in the life of Hus. The " academic " period, as Dr. Flajshans has aptly named it, now ends. During this period Hus was mainly occupied with university studies and lectures and, still in agreement with his ecclesiastical superiors, enjoyed a comparative degree of quiet such as was never again to be his lot.

Before, however, dealing with the period of strife that now awaited Hus and during which the events of his life become

[1] The language of Hus is very forcible. He writes: "Qualiter hoc est quod incestuosi et varie criminosi absque rigo (sic) correctionis tamquam tauri indomiti et equi emmissarii collis extentis incedunt libere, sacerdotes autem humiles, spinas peccati evellentes officium vestri implentes regiminis ex bono affectu, non sequentes avaritiam, sed gratis pro Deo se offerentes ad evangelizationis laborem tamquam haeretici mancipantur carceribus et exilium propter evangelizationem ipsius evangelii patiuntur." Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 1-2. The MS. copied and published by Palacky is somewhat defective. It is in this letter that Hus—as mentioned above—refers to the mandate given him by the archbishop to report on the conduct of the clergy of Prague.

[2] Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 5-7.

involved in the whirlpool of the politics of his time, the early writings of the Bohemian church-reformer should be briefly noticed. They are more numerous than was formerly believed. Earlier writers generally surmised that all, or almost all, his works had been written during the last six troublous years of his life (1409-1415). It is true that far fewer writings of Hus were then known than is the case at present. Yet it is nevertheless a physical impossibility that Hus should, during those troubled years of exile and imprisonment, have written all the numerous Bohemian and Latin works with which we are now acquainted. The bibliography of the works of Hus is still incomplete, though the masterly work of Dr. Flajshans, entitled *Literarni Cinnost Mistra Jana Husi* (The Literary Activity of Master John Hus), has thrown a vast amount of light on a formerly very obscure subject. Even now almost unknown manuscripts of Hus that were secreted in little-known libraries continue to be re-discovered and published.

Very early Bohemian writings of Hus, perhaps his earliest, are some sermons that have been recently discovered. Of these some had been partially known previously, as Hus had, as was his custom, incorporated them, though in a modified form, in other works, particularly in his *Postilla*. The discovery is due to that indefatigable scholar, Mr. Adolphus Patera, formerly librarian of the Bohemian museum at Prague. Mr. Patera found these manuscripts in the library of the Cistercian monastery at Wilhering in Upper Austria, and published them in the *Journal of the Bohemian Society of Sciences*. Hus, or rather the copier, here still uses the ancient system of writing Bohemian which, as will be mentioned later, was so greatly ameliorated and altered by Hus himself. He here also still intersperses his sentences with Latin words, a proceeding of which Hus strongly disapproved when he began to devote his attention to the language of his country. On the other hand, we here already find Hus's holy hatred of vice and immorality, and he here already propounds the theory

that sin is no more permissible to a priest than to a layman, and indeed more blamable—a theory that appeared paradoxical to most of Hus's contemporaries, particularly among the priesthood. Thus when preaching on Zacchaeus (St. Luke, chap. xix.) he says: "Those householders are manifest sinners who allow immorality or dice-playing in their houses. I say the same of dancing, by which they mock God on Sundays. As St. Bernard says, those who, particularly if they are priests, allow in their houses dancing or diceing or immorality, commit a mortal sin, and the priests more so than the laymen, for what is venial for a layman is mortal for a priest."[1] A very early Bohemian work of Hus also is his translation of the *Trialogus* of Wycliffe. It was probably made between the years 1403 and 1407. If, as has been conjectured on the strength of statements made at the trial of Jerome of Prague at Constance, Jerome assisted Hus in this translation, this would be the only known instance of collaboration between him and Jerome. The translation has been long, and probably irretrievably lost, and its existence is known to us only through the testimony of numerous contemporary writers. Numerous manuscripts of it appear to have existed, but were destroyed during the period of Romanist reaction that followed the battle of the White Mountain. The translation was dedicated to the Margrave Jodocus of Moravia, a cousin of King Venceslas. It is probable that the frequent quotations from this work of Wycliffe which we find in the writings of the later Bohemian reformer, Peter Chelcicky, were derived from this translation.

Among Hus's Latin works that belong to this early period is one that, though formerly almost unknown, is the largest and may also be considered the greatest of his Latin works. Though Hus here also conforms to the scholastic system which required incessant quotations and "authorities," he

[1] *Vestnik Kralovské ceské spolecnosti nauk* (Journal of the Rl. Bohemian Society of Sciences) for 1890, p. 360.

appears here as both a profounder and a more original scholar than in books such as the treatise, *De Ecclesia*. I refer to Hus's work, *Super IV. Sententiarum*," which has quite recently been published by Dr. Flajshans.[1] The discovery of this work has already changed, and will in future probably even more change, the appreciation of Hus as a scholar. The book is a vast commentary on the then world-famed work of Peter Lombard entitled *Sententiarum Libri quatuor*. This book, the work of Peter, born at Lumello in Lombardy—whence his name of Lombardus—towards the end of the eleventh century, was for many generations the recognised text-book of theology. Peter's work consists in a vast collection of the opinions of the fathers of the church on all matters of faith, the writer generally refraining from stating his own views. Though Peter's book was, of course, in strictest accordance with the views of the Church of Rome as far as they had been formulated in his time, yet it did not always escape suspicion. The work, which is based on the fluctuating foundation of patristic tradition, and places side by side contradictory opinions, bears traces of a freedom that was afterwards lost.[2] The scholastic writers, indeed, contributed very little to the development of dogma. Laying stress rather on those truths that had been longest accepted, they endeavoured to steer clear of dangerously contentious matters. Thus the sentences of Peter contain no references to the papacy. In spite of these circumstances the *Libri Sententiarum* was a generally recognised authority, and innumerable commentaries on the work soon began to appear. Most young theologians at the beginning of their career lectured on Peter Lombard and then published their lectures in the form of a commentary on his work. Thus Hus's contemporary and great adversary, Peter of Ailly, also wrote as his first work a commentary on the

[1] *Super IV. Sententiarum Heraurgegeben von Wenzel Flajshans und Dr. Marie Kominkova*, 1906.

[2] Dr. Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, vol. iii. p. 330.

*Sententiarum Libri quatuor*.[1] The advancement of his academic career was, as Dr. Flajshans conjectures, an inducement to Hus to undertake this great work, which he began in 1407. Peter Lombard's book, founded largely on St. Augustine, had, however, in itself great attraction for Hus. Hus's book, *Super IV. Sententiarum*, proves that the writer was at that time already a man of vast erudition. Hus followed the argumentation and order of ideas of Lombard, whose work was the subject of his commentary. He borrowed largely from the earlier commentators, Bonaventura and St. Thomas Aquinas. He also quotes extensively St. Augustine and the *Trialogus* of Wycliffe. In some cases, when it was endeavoured to establish a dependence of Hus on Wycliffe, more careful research has proved that both writers had—as was then frequently the case—borrowed extensively and without acknowledgment from the works of Peter Lombard. Of the many other writers used by Hus we may mention St. Anselm, Duns Scotus, Occam, and Bradwardine.[2] It is interesting to note as a proof of Hus's extensive learning that when he—in Book II. distinction 8—treats of the truly scholastic question, whether the angels have bodies naturally (*naturaliter*) joined to them, he quotes to support his views the opinions, firstly, of St. Augustine, secondly, of Plato—in the *Timaeus*—thirdly, of Apulejus! It must be noticed that in this extensive work Hus's teaching is entirely in accordance with that of the Roman Church of his time. In one of his latest works, written but a few months before his death, Hus lays stress on this fact, and in answer to the accusation levelled against him of having denied the validity of the sacrament when administered by an unworthy priest, he quoted his early lectures on Peter Lombard.[3] This is entirely in accordance with the truth.

[1] Tschackert, *Peter von Ailly*, p. 11.

[2] Hus calls him "Bragwardin," p. 293 of Dr. Flajshans's edition of *Super IV. Sententiarum*.

[3] See p. xvii. of Dr. Flajshans's (German) introduction to *Super IV. Sententiarum*.

Hus in his *Super IV. Sententiarum* has expressed on this difficult question views that are identical with those of Rome.[1] Even an unworthy priest can validly administer the sacrament. It is sufficient that he who administers it should be a priest, should speak the words of consecration, and should have the intention of administering the sacrament, that is, of doing what the church does.

It is obviously beyond the purpose of this book to give a detailed account of this great work of Hus's, which can be described as a commentary on the dogmatics as expounded in the then universally recognised text-book of Peter Lombard. The book, which has only been recently brought to public knowledge, is far too little known, and well deserves to attract attention, particularly among theologians. Of the other Latin works of Hus that belong to this period two, the treatises *De Corpore Christi* and *De Sanguine Christi*, have already been mentioned.

[1] " Distinccio ista 13a. . . . continet quod sacerdotes aliqui, licet sint pravi, consecrant vere, quia non in merito consecrantis sed in verbo efficitur creatoris." (*Super IV. Sententiarum, Lib. IV. Distinccio XIII.* pp. 582-588, of Dr. Flajshans's edition.)

## CHAPTER IV

### THE BEGINNING OF HUS'S OPPOSITION TO THE CHURCH OF ROME

It has already been noted that the end of the year 1408 is a very important landmark in the life of Hus. He henceforth appears an open enemy of Rome, though he continued to the end of his life to consider himself a true and faithful member of the Church of Christ. The history of Hus at this period widens out and becomes more closely connected with the vast stage of European politics on which Hus himself for a brief moment appears as a prominent figure. The political situation of Europe at the beginning of the fifteenth century was entirely, either directly or indirectly, influenced by the great Western schism. The cardinals assembled in Rome in 1378 had elected as pope, Bartolomeo Prignano, Archbishop of Bari, who assumed the name of Urban VI. Though the Roman Church has in later days declared that Urban VI. and his successors up to Gregory XII. were legitimate popes, Urban's election was impugned almost immediately, as having been obtained by violence and by intimidation on the part of the populace of Rome. A few months after the election of Urban a certain number of—mostly French—cardinals elected as pope, Robert, Cardinal of Geneva, who took the name of Clement VII. The following period, during which two, and for some time three, popes claimed to be the successors of St. Peter, is one of the darkest in the history of the church. The struggle, however, here requires notice only as far as it concerned Bohemia and the fate of Hus in particular. Verbal warfare between the contending popes was waged in the coarsely vituperative manner customary among mediæval theologians. The formidable power of excommunication

which the popes possessed was misused for the purpose of crushing political enemies. To equip armed forces against their adversaries, the contending popes raised money by taxing the faithful, selling absolutions and benefices, and other simoniacal means. Each pope being only able to claim a certain number of countries as belonging to his "obedience," as it was called, the papal agents became ever more extortionate. It is only by taking these facts into account that we can explain the spirit of intense hatred and scorn with which contemporary, even moderate writers, some of whom had been papal officials, speak of the Roman Church. It was natural that at such a period pious and unworldly men, when contrasting the events of their times with their own ideals, should feel an intense longing for the true Church of Christ as they conceived it.

When Pope Urban VI. died in 1389, the cardinals of his obedience, fearing that the termination of the schism might prove disadvantageous to them, immediately chose as Urban's successor the Neapolitan cardinal, Piero Tomacelli, who took the title of Boniface IX. Similarly, after the death of Clement VII. in 1394, the Spaniard, Peter de Luna, who took the name of Benedict XIII., was elected pope by the cardinals of Clement's obedience. The cardinals of both obediences, with characteristic insincerity and falseness, continued meanwhile to maintain that their greatest wish was to terminate the schism. This, however, for the time appeared impossible, nor did the deaths of Boniface IX. in 1404, and of his successor Innocent VII. in 1406, change the situation. Pope Gregory XII. was immediately chosen as the successor of Innocent, and though he conformed to the custom of his predecessors by stating that he wished to re-establish the unity of the church, it was thoroughly understood that, to each of the two popes and to his adherents, unity of the church meant the recognition of the pope of their obedience and the division of the benefices of the church among his principal partisans.

In the year 1408 the principal dignitaries of the Roman Church, with the weighty moral support of the universities of Paris and Bologna, made a determined attempt to terminate the schism. After difficult and prolonged negotiations, cardinals of both obediences, together with many other dignitaries, met at Pisa on March 25, 1409. The debates were stormy and at times threatened to be resultless, but finally the council deprived both popes, Benedict and Gregory, of the papal rank and all other dignities, declaring them to be heretics and schismatics. The faithful were released from their oath of fidelity to both popes, and all decrees and nominations that they might publish were declared void. It remained to elect a new pope. Mainly through the influence of the cardinal-legate of Bologna, Baldassare Cossa, who was the leading spirit of the council of Pisa, Peter Philargi, Cardinal of Milan, was chosen as pope. He assumed the name of Alexander V. His reign was short. Through the influence of Cossa, his principal councillor, he was induced, though already a man of over seventy years, to travel in the middle of winter across the Apennines from Pisa to Bologna. Though he became ill in consequence of the hardships of his journey, his life was not at first despaired of; but he died at Bologna on May 11, 1410, poisoned, as appears almost certain, by Cardinal Cossa, aided by Cossa's doctor, Master Daniele di Santa Sofia.[1] Baldassare Cossa now openly assumed the authority which he had practically already wielded. On May 17, Cossa was by the cardinals then present at Bologna elected pope, " unfortunately for himself and many others," as Niem writes. Though his enemies from the first declared that his election was due to intimidation, Cossa was a few days later crowned pope under the name of John XXIII. in the cathedral church of St. Petronius.

[1] Of the many crimes of which Baldassare Cossa was rightly or wrongly accused, this appears one of the most authenticated. See Giovanni Gozzadini, *Nanne Gozzadini e Baldassare Cossa*, pp. 367 and 368, where a list of contemporary authorities on this subject is given. Mr. Gozzadini's book contains much authenticated information on the early life of Pope John XXIII.

While the popes and cardinals previously mentioned enter but little into the life of Hus, this is not the case as regards Baldassare Cossa. We meet with Pope John XXIII. in some of the most important moments of the life of Hus. It was this pope who summoned Hus to Rome. It was the attempt of Cossa to raise funds in Bohemia for the continuation of his war against Naples that caused the troubles in Prague which forced Hus to exile himself. It was Pope John XXIII. who appears as Hus's principal antagonist during the earlier part of his stay at Constance. It was Baldassare Cossa through whose influence Hus was imprisoned shortly after his arrival at Constance—though the pope repudiated the responsibility for this act whenever he found it convenient to do so. It is therefore interesting to glance briefly at the early life of this pontiff. Baldassare Cossa was born at Naples about the year 1360 and took orders at a very early age. He, however, early in life, felt the vocation of a soldier, and took part in the struggle for the Neapolitan throne between Ladislas of Hungary and Louis of Anjou. Military discipline, however, soon became irksome to Cossa, who is stated to have behaved rather as a brigand than as a soldier. Bishop Creighton, writing with his usual moderation, states that his life exceeded the bounds of military licence." [1] It has often been stated [2] that he for a time became a pirate, but this tale probably only indicates that he took part in naval warfare during the struggle between the competitors for the Neapolitan crown. Though no one could be less worthy of the papal tiara than Cossa, he was undoubtedly, particularly in his younger days, a man of exceptional talent and reckless determination, endowed with an absolute contempt for the distinction of good and evil,

[1] *History of Papacy*, vol. i. p. 268.

[2] "Dum autem simplex clericus ac in adolescentia constitutus existeret cum quibusdam fratribus suis piraticam in mari Neopolitano, ut fertur exercuit." (Theodoric de Niem, *De Vita Papae Joannis XXIII.*) Except the members of the council of Constance, no one writes of Baldassare Cossa with greater animosity than this grey-grown servitor of the popes.

From "Magnum Oecumenicum Constantiense Concilium."
by Hermanni von der Hardt.

*jenseits des Guten und Bösen*, to use Nietsche's now almost proverbial expression. If he played a somewhat pitiable part at Constance, we may assume that the excesses of his earlier days had impaired his formerly brilliant mental power. Finding that a military career was not at that moment likely to lead to rapid advancement, Cossa took to study and visited the famed University of Bologna. He here obtained the degree of laureate both of civil and of canon law " in consequence of his talents," though he was said to have been more assiduous in debauchery than in study. The accusations afterwards brought forward against Cossa at Constance are terrible. Even if we distrust some of Niem's hideously-grotesque tales, and believe that some of the evidence produced at Constance may have been spurious, Cossa's record remains very black. Almost all contemporary writers assert that he was tainted with unnatural vice. Cossa soon ingratiated himself with his countryman, Pope Boniface IX., who appointed him archdeacon of Bologna, an important office, the holder of which acted as rector of the university. To be nearer to the pontiff Cossa proceeded to Rome, and by paying large sums to the pope, whose avarice was insatiable, he became Bishop of Ischia, and cardinal in 1402. He then obtained other ecclesiastical dignities, and was finally sent as papal legate to Bologna, Ferrara Ravenna, and Rimini. These cities, which, during the then prevailing anarchy, had thrown off the papal rule, were subdued by Cossa. Not less greedy for money than his patron Pope Boniface, the new legate succeeded in extorting vast sums from these cities, particularly from Bologna, where even the churches and monasteries were not secure from his greed. Cossa for a time became absolute ruler of Bologna, hardly caring to keep up the pretence that he was acting as a papal legate. His reign of terror, which obtained for him the name of " *diavolo cardinale*," [1] scarcely suffered any interruption, when a conflict broke out between

[1] Mr. Gozzadini, quoting from the archives of the Gozzadini family.

him and Pope Gregory XII., the second successor of his former patron. Pope Gregory had appointed his nephew to the wealthy bishopric of Bologna, the revenues of which Cardinal Cossa refused to renounce. Deadly enmity sprang up between the cardinal and the pope, who excommunicated him, stating "that notorious facts proved that the disciple (*alumnus*) of perdition, Baldassare Cossa, formerly cardinal deacon of St. Eustachius, formerly apostolic legate, had with other sons of iniquity revolted against the pope and the mother-church of God, that he had treated with contempt the worship of God, neglected the ceremonies of the Christian religion, and seized the sword of Satan and that of tyrannical power."[1] Cossa retaliated without delay. Carrying out a plan he had perhaps previously conceived, he granted his protection to the council assembled at Pisa, which, in the disturbed state in which Italy then was, could hardly have met had it not been for the strong military force that was under Cossa's command. Through his influence Pope Alexander was elected, and, as already mentioned, Cossa shortly became his successor. As Pope John XXIII. he resumed his former Italian policy, endeavouring in a manner not dissimilar from that afterwards employed by Caesar Borgia to carve out a kingdom for himself in that land. His most dangerous opponent was King Ladislas of Naples. It was by attempting to raise money for the purpose of a crusade against Naples that John XXIII. became the cause of disturbances in the distant city of Prague. When, on the repeated invitation of the Emperor Sigismund, Cossa reluctantly proceeded to Constance, his former good fortune seems to have forsaken him. A thorough Italian, he appears out of his element in northern lands.

After noticing briefly the general state of European politics, dominated as it was entirely by the schism, reference must again be made to Hus. In Bohemia, as elsewhere, the schism was the almost exclusive object of public interest. It has

[1] Abridged from *Raynaldus Annales Ecclesiasticae*, vol. viii. p. 220.

already been noted that the rival pontiffs always expressed their desire that the schism should be brought to an end. Pope Gregory XII., who had by the cardinals of the Roman obedience been elected as successor to Boniface IX. and to Innocent VII., soon after his accession informed the University of Prague that he was ready to resign his dignity, should his opponent Benedict do likewise. There is, however, no evidence that either pope would have accepted any solution except the abdication of his rival. When the cardinals assembled at Pisa to choose a new pope, they addressed a petition to Venceslas and all other Christian princes, begging them to maintain neutrality, that is to say, to recognise henceforth neither of the contending pontiffs, Gregory and Benedict. Venceslas was inclined to view such a proposal favourably. The French court, which was on traditional terms of friendship with the house of Luxemburg, had decreed that, up to the conclusion of the schism, the popes should not be allowed to exercise the papal rights in France. They would thus become unable to confer benefices, and it was hoped that they would in consequence lose many of their supporters. This measure rightly appeared to Venceslas as a first step towards a pacification. He had, however, as was always the case, great difficulty in coming to a decision. In 1408 he had already entered into negotiations with the cardinals who had deserted Gregory and Benedict. He first employed for this purpose Magister Mauritius de Praga,[1] who was, as far as we can conjecture from the very contradictory reports, a partisan of Pope Gregory. At any rate he did nothing to further the negotiations that had been entrusted to him. In October of the same year Venceslas sent to Italy as his envoys two members of the University of Prague, Magisters Stanislas of Znoymo and Stephen Palec, who were known as members of the party favourable to church-reform. The envoys were to proceed to Pisa, but were on their journey arrested at Bologna

[1] By Hus and his friends generally known as "Rvacka."

by order of Cardinal Cossa. As Cossa was the guiding spirit of the council and the envoys were representatives of a sovereign supposed to be favourable to its plan of pacification, this step of Cardinal Cossa has caused much controversy and remains unexplained. Perhaps the fact that the envoys carried with them a large sum of money and had numerous horses in their convoy—they were deprived of both coins and horses—affords some clue to this occurrence. It is also very probable that some message had been sent to Bologna from Prague, stating that the envoys were "Wycliffites." This would give Cardinal Cossa a welcome pretext for his depredation. The envoys were very roughly treated by the mercenaries of Cossa, and Stephen Palec is said never to have recovered from the fright he felt at this time. Hus did not hesitate to affirm that this was the reason why the opinions of Palec changed suddenly after his mission to Italy. The University of Prague determined to take steps to insure the safety of its imprisoned members. On the suggestion of Hus, Henning of Baltenhagen, then rector, addressed, on December 8, 1408, a complaint to the cardinals assembled at Pisa,[1] stating that those venerable men, Stanislas, of Znoymo, professor of theology, and Stephen Palec, bachelor of theology, "well-beloved sons of the university," had been deprived of their possessions and imprisoned. After praising "the vigorous wisdom, praiseworthy conversation, and solid doctrine" of these men, the letter begged that they might be released. Cossa was on very good terms with the council, and the prisoners were almost immediately liberated, though their goods were not restored to them.

Very shortly after Stanislas and Stephen had started for Italy, and probably before their arrestation had become known in Bohemia, Venceslas decided to send another envoy to the council. He had previously, in a letter forwarded to the cardinals at Pisa on November 24, 1408,[2] declared his willing-

[1] Palacky, *Documenta*, p. 345. [2] *Ibid.* p. 343.

ness to send an envoy to Pisa on condition that such an envoy should be considered as a representative not only of the King of Bohemia but also of the King of the Romans. A few years previously some of the German electors had deposed Venceslas and elected in his stead as king Rupert, Count Palatine. It was the invasion of Bohemia by German troops acting in the cause of Rupert that was the occasion of the famed eloquent sermon of Hus, which has already been mentioned. Venceslas had never recognised his deposition, and the demand which he addressed to the cardinals therefore appears justified. It appears to have been accepted, but after considerable delay, for it was only a year later that the king's new representative, Master John "Kardinal,"[1] of Reinstein, started for Italy. While Stanislas and Stephen appear to have had only a semi-private mission, Magister Reinstein acted as the king's official representative. Reinstein was a firm adherent of the party of church-reform and a warm personal friend of Hus up to the end of his life. Venceslas's choice of an envoy is therefore significative.

The attempt of the cardinals assembled at Pisa to induce the principal European powers to accept the system of neutrality, that is to say, to renounce the obedience of both Gregory and Benedict, proved on the whole successful. France, where the University of Paris used its great influence in favour of a measure which would, as was believed, terminate the schism, declared in favour of neutrality. In Germany also John of Nassau, the powerful Archbishop of Maintz, used his vast influence in favour of neutrality, though Rupert of the Palatinate, Venceslas's rival as King of the Romans, a firm supporter of Pope Gregory, strongly opposed it. Bohemia would, according to the wishes of Venceslas, also have immediately adhered to the system of neutrality. The fact alone that Rupert of the Palatinate whom Gregory had recognised as King of the Romans opposed that system,

[1] This strange designation of Master John of Reinstein was a nickname.

rendered it the obvious policy of Venceslas to adopt it. Yet he found difficulties in his path. Archbishop Zbynek was then and continued to a somewhat later period an adherent of Gregory. At the university opinion was divided. The German magisters, many of whom secretly sympathised with Rupert in his conflict with their king, were loath to renounce the obedience of Gregory. The Bohemian members of the university, on the other hand, were unanimous in their desire to comply with the wishes of King Venceslas. They were by no means blind to the many failings of the king, but they believed him to be on the whole a well-meaning sovereign not unfavourable to the cause of church-reform. It should indeed be noted that the very exaggerated unfavourable accounts of the life of Wenceslas, which have been repeated by countless historians, had their origin rather in the favour he for a time accorded to Hus and his disciples than in the very real failings of Venceslas, which he shared with many other princes of the fifteenth century. The Bohemian members of the university were also largely dependent on the king's favour for obtaining the changes at the university favourable to their nation, which they desired. Another motive may also have influenced them. Many of the Bohemian masters may have read the works of Wycliffe and other opponents of the extreme pretensions of the papal see. Such men would be less opposed to the deposition of popes than others who upheld the unlimited authority of papacy; for we meet already with such upholders at this period.[1] The differences of opinion caused by the question of neutrality, as was inevitable, accentuated and envenomed the national discord which already prevailed at the university, where a Bohemian majority was oppressed and deprived of its rights by a somewhat overbearing German minority. At a meeting of the members of the university

[1] Dr. Harnack writes (*Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, vol. iii., pp. 398-399 n.): "The book de planctu ecclesiae of the Franciscan monk Alvarus Pelagius . . . contains passages which prove that even in the nineteenth century the glorification of papacy could not be carried to a greater extreme."

held late in the year 1408, the rector Baltenhagen and all the German members energetically maintained that Gregory should continue to be recognised as pope. The Bohemians—Hus acting as spokesman—expressed themselves strongly in favour of neutrality up to the time when a new pope should have been elected. The meeting broke up without a vote having been taken, probably because Baltenhagen was afraid of offending the king. Hus always maintained that it was from this moment that he lost the favour of the archbishop. It is certain that shortly after this meeting a decree signed by Archbishop Zbynek declared that Hus, as a disobedient son of the church, was forbidden the exercise of ecclesiastical functions. Hus replied in an eloquent letter—to which reference was made in the last chapter—and the correspondence then ceased.

King Venceslas, who had for some time been residing in Silesia, left that country about the end of the year 1408, and returning to Bohemia, proceeded to Kutna Hora (Kuttenberg), where he and his court remained for a considerable time. Venceslas here awaited the visit of a French embassy, the purpose of which, as was known, was to persuade the king to follow the example of France by renouncing the obedience of Gregory and Benedict. The opinion of the University of Prague at this period was of great importance in all theological discussions. It was customary to consult it in such cases, as had been done in Paris and Bologna. Venceslas therefore summoned to Kutna Hora some of the most prominent members of the university. Among them were the rector Henning of Baltenhagen and several other Germans, as well as four Bohemian masters, the most prominent of whom were Hus, and Jerome who had just returned to Bohemia from prolonged travels. The king first discussed matters with the rector, who adroitly avoided entirely the question of the schism, but complained bitterly of the "Wycliffite" agitation, which, he said, endangered the peace of the city of

Prague, as well as the fame of Bohemia as a country exempt from all heresies. He thus referred to a matter which deeply touched the king, as indeed all Bohemians. It is difficult at the present day to realise what a sense of opprobrium the word " heretic " conveyed even to men who openly by deed and word opposed the Church of Rome. Bohemia had always boasted that it was untainted by heresy. Hus in the moment of death declared that he had never expressed heretical views. As late as at the council of Basel the Hussite envoys protested more energetically against the statement that they were heretics than against any other accusation. The anger of Venceslas, who was undoubtedly misled by the cunning German, is therefore natural. The king also may have feared that the popular excitement might cause riots in Prague. Venceslas graciously dismissed Henning of Baltenhagen and then addressed Hus and Jerome in very violent language. He accused them of fomenting disorders in the land and threatened them with death at the stake.

Other councils, however, soon prevailed with King Venceslas. His courtiers were almost all favourable to the party of church-reform, and they frequently assisted at Hus's sermons in the Bethlehem chapel. They were far too true courtiers to interfere at a moment when the king was carried away by fury, but they gradually guided his thoughts back to the bias they had formerly had. They obtained powerful aid from the members of the French embassy, which arrived at Kutna Hora in January, 1409. The embassy was very numerous, and as was then customary, particularly when ecclesiastical matters were to be discussed, it included theologians —members of the famed University of Paris. These men employed all their eloquence in endeavouring to persuade Venceslas to renounce the allegiance of Pope Gregory, and it is very probable that, when the opposition of the German members of the University of Prague was mentioned, the French envoys may have pointed out that the Paris University

granted no such great privileges to aliens.[1] The queen also spoke strongly in favour of the party of Hus. Finally, Nicholas of Lobkowitz, a favourite courtier of the king and one who, as manager of the royal mines at Kutna Hora, had daily access to his sovereign, prevailed on him to sign the famous decree of Kutna Hora (January 18, 1409). In this decree, addressed to the rector of the University of Prague, the king, after the usual formal introductory remarks, proceeds to state that whereas the Teutonic nation, possessing no rights of citizenship in Bohemia, claims, as is truthfully reported, three votes in all matters concerning the University of Prague, while the Bohemian nation, the lawful heirs of this kingdom, possesses and enjoys but one, (therefore) the king, considering it most unjust and unbeseeming that foreigners and aliens should largely enjoy the advantages that belong rightly to the residents, who consider themselves oppressed by this loss and disadvantage, decrees that the university shall henceforth, without all resistance, allow the Bohemian nation to have in all assemblies, judgments, examinations, elections, and other transactions three votes in the same manner as the French nation has them in Paris, and in accordance with the regulations of Lombardy and Italy. The decree ends by stating that the rector, should he not act according to these instructions, would incur the king's gravest displeasure.[2]

This famous decree, which entirely altered the constitution of the university, was naturally received with great enthusiasm by the national party. The principal leader of that party was at this moment seriously ill. Hus, whose nature, in spite of his indomitable physical courage, was a very sensitive one, felt deeply the insulting speech of the king, for whom he, as a loyal Bohemian, felt affection and respect. On his

[1] Venceslas's decree changing the constitution of the university—which will be mentioned presently—alludes to the regulations of the University of Paris.

[2] Abridged from the Latin original, printed by Palacky (*Documenta*, pp. 347-348).

return to Prague he was seized by one of those violent attacks of illness that were not infrequent during his troubled and comparatively short life. It is stated that the good news reached Master John on his sick-bed late on the night of January 19. His friend Nicholas of Lobkowitz had sent a messenger to him with a copy of the decree of Kutna Hora. Hus, Dr. Flajshans writes, eagerly seized with his hands that still trembled from fever this magna charta of the liberty of the Bohemian nation in the university. Almost immediately afterwards Hus was visited by two friends, who found him still in a state of joyful excitement. "Would it be just," he asked them, "if we had three votes?" Standing near the bed of Hus they both answered as with one voice, "Would that God did but grant it! We shall never attain to such a power." Hus answered: "Here is a copy of the king's letter to the university. Read!" Hus's visitors, ancient masters of the Bohemian nation who had struggled for many years for the rights of their country, were overwhelmed with surprise and joy. Hus, pointing to his emaciated body, exhorted his comrades to fortitude. "I am," he said, "nearly dying; if then I die, defend, I beg you, the rights and the freedom of our nation." [1]

After the decisive step, the publication of the decree of Kutna Hora, had been taken, events moved with great rapidity. Only four days later a new decree of King Venceslas [2] stated that the cardinals (*i.e.*, those who had renounced the obediences of Gregory and Benedict), his dearest friends, men who were zealous for the unity of the church, had earnestly begged him to refuse obedience to the two contending pontiffs, pointing out that thus only could peace among the Christian people and the amity of the church be secured. Venceslas then threatened with severe penalties all who should obey any orders of Pope Gregory—Pope Benedict had never been

[1] Flajshans, *Mistr Jan Hus*, pp. 194-195.
[2] Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 348-349.

recognised by any one in Bohemia—or his party, or favour them in any way.

On January 26, the royal decree was read to the assembled members of the university. The Germans openly expressed their displeasure, and at a meeting which took place a few days later all the German members of the university pledged themselves, "under the fourfold penalty of perjury, excommunication, deprivation of honours, and a fine of threescore hundred groschen," to leave the university and never again pursue their studies there, rather than admit that the Bohemians should have three votes at the deliberations of the university and the other nations only one. Hus, though he has often been falsely accused of wishing to expel the German students from Prague, strongly blamed this decision and advised them to "annul their foolish and illicit vow, which the devil had inspired." [1] Before leaving Prague, however, the German magisters determined to address a remonstrance to Venceslas. This short letter, which cannot be said to have been couched in a very respectful tone, was delivered to the king on February 6. It stated that under an influence or influences known to God alone [2] the king had sent to the university, his daughter, a letter which seriously decreed that the Bohemian nation should in future have three votes at the university and the other nations only one. The German magisters then proceeded to point out the evil results which they said this decree would certainly have.

The king, a few days later, sent a lengthy reply,[3] which very clearly states his case and deserves a somewhat detailed

[1] "Si quis vestrum juravit ut exiret de Bohemia nunquam reversurus hic illicite juravit; rescindat juramentum stultum illicitum, a dyabolo et a suis satellitibus inductum." (*Super IV. Sententiarum*, vol. vi. d. i. p. 503 of Dr. Flajshans's edition). In his introduction to the work *Super IV. Sententiarum*, Dr. Flajshans has very skilfully proved that this lecture on Peter Lombard was delivered at the time when the German students were preparing to leave Prague.

[2] "Ex cujus vel quorum inductione Deus novit." Palacky, *Documenta*, p. 351.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 355-363.

notice. Venceslas began by stating that his royal prerogative permitted him to make whatever changes he thought fit at the university, and then pointed out that he had the right to consider the three nations which had joined into one German nation as a single unity. The letter then, with the abundance of biblical quotations customary at that period, blamed the disobedience of those who refused to obey the king, the ruler of Bohemia. It was further stated that the inhabitants of the kingdom of Bohemia, the true Bohemians (*regnicolae regni Bohemiae, veri Bohemi*), were entitled to receive such privileges as the king thought fit to bestow on them, and that he had rightly given them such privileges with regard to judgments, offices, elections, and other concerns of the university. The foreign nations—the letter continued to say—or rather the Teutonic nation, should humbly obey the decree of the king, which conferred three votes on the Bohemian nation, mindful of the words: "Friend, I do thee no wrong . . . take that thine is and go thy way. . . . Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?"[1] The letter then affirms, again bringing forward scriptural quotations to support the affirmation, that the Bohemian nation must be the ruler (*rectrix*) of the other nations at the university, and that the Teutonic nation therefore, by claiming three votes, claims supremacy over the Bohemian one—a claim that is contrary to the king's wishes and undutiful to God. The Teutonic nation—the letter continues—would never admit that at Vienna or Heidelberg the Bohemians should hold superior rank and rule over the inhabitants. It is written: As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.[2] If, therefore, the Teutons wish that the Bohemians in Germany should not oppose their supremacy, let them in Bohemia act similarly towards the Bohemians. Both canon and civil law teach that the in-

[1] Matthew xx. 13-15; only the passages given above are quoted in the letter.

[2] Luke vi. 31.

habitants of a kingdom should hold supremacy over the foreigners who visit their country. The letter then contains a detailed refutation of the German statement that the regulations favourable to them at the university were of long standing. Denying this, the letter declares that Charles IV., according to his charter of foundation, had wished it mainly to benefit his Bohemian subjects. If the Bohemians were at first inferior to the Germans in learning, and were indeed as slaves, they now have, with God's help, become stronger and superior to the Germans in all arts and sciences. Let, therefore, those who had formerly been advantaged at the expense of the true owners of the land give way to them, and let these true owners rule the university for all centuries.

The authorship of this very important document has often been attributed to Hus, but it is more probable that it was the work of his disciple, Master John of Jesenice. The question is of little importance, as the document clearly and circumstantially expresses the views of the whole national party. Important as this state-paper was in any case, it became yet more so in consequence of the events that followed almost immediately.

After the publication of the decree of Kutna Hora all work at the university stopped. It became impossible to elect a rector, and constant conflicts between Bohemians and Germans occurred. The stern command of the king to elect a rector remained unheeded by the Germans, and when the royal decree referred to above was brought to their knowledge, they immediately determined to carry out their threats. Some of the most important German masters had already entered into negotiations with German princes, such as the Landgrave of Thuringia and the Margrave of Meissen, with regard to their eventual emigration to Germany. These negotiations, however, took up some time, and it was only on May 16 that a large number of German magisters and students left Prague for Leipzig. Including servants and menials, they

are stated to have numbered about 2000 men. They arrived at Leipzig about the end of May, and there founded a new university, of which, according to some records, the former rector of the University of Prague, Henning of Baltenhagen, according to others, John of Münsterberg, became the first rector. The former German students of Prague never forgave the injury which they had, according to their views, suffered. They became bitter enemies of Bohemia and of church-reform, and firm adherents of the Roman cause. The Polish students did not take part in the exodus, but remained in Prague with their comrades of the kindred Bohemian nationality.

The departure of the German students from Prague has given rise to a very bitter and prolonged controversy that even now can scarcely be considered as terminated. Writers such as Höfler and Helfert, whose works appeared at a time when the Austrian government was under the influence of extreme ultramontane and Teutonic tendencies, naturally sympathised with the German masters and students who held similar views four centuries previously. Baron Helfert, a distinguished conservative statesman, wrote with dignity and moderation. As much cannot be said of Professor Höfler, who everywhere, and here in particular, overwhelms Hus and the Hussites with an incoherent torrent of vituperation. Höfler repeats the ancient accusation against Hus of having endeavoured to expel the Germans from the university. Even before Hus's views had been shown more clearly by the remarks contained in one of his recently re-discovered works,[1] it was obvious to all impartial minds that this was untrue.[2] Of the modern Bohemian writers Palacky was by the Austrian authorities only allowed towards the close of his life to express his real views[3] with regard to Hus and the Hussites and the

[1] The *Supra IV. Sententiarum*. See above.

[2] The matter is stated very clearly by Mr. Krummel in his *Geschichte der Böhmischen Reformation*, p. 207. Mr. Krummel, though a German, writes of Hus entirely without animus.

[3] See my *Lectures on the Historians of Bohemia*, pp. 95-96.

exodus of the German students in particular. Very important, in connection with the departure of the German students from Prague, is the account of that event given by Professor Tomek in his monumental history of the town of Prague (*Dejepis mesta Prahy*), a work that has unfortunately never been translated.

To judge the question impartially it is necessary to consider the circumstances under which Charles IV. founded the University of Prague. I have given a brief account of them in Chapter III. of this work. There is no doubt that Charles founded the university mainly for the benefit of his Bohemian subjects, that they might, as he expressly stated, find at home the instruction which they had formerly been obliged to seek abroad. It is not probable that the question of race and nationality immediately became prominent. In a community, all whose members habitually used the Latin language, there is indeed no reason why this should have been the case. There is also no doubt, and the state-paper of Venceslas admits this, that the Bohemians were at the time of the foundation of the university somewhat backward and inferior in learning to the Germans. This inferiority has, however, been exaggerated by many writers. Thus, as mentioned previously, a large number of the earliest teachers at the university were Bohemians who had received their education at foreign universities. Other facts also, such as the contemporary writings of Thomas of Stitny, tend to prove that the ignorance of the Bohemians at this period has been exaggerated. In any case, enough is known of the character of Charles, a believer in the solidarity of the Slavic countries, "panslavism," as it has often been foolishly called,[1] to state with full assurance that he had no intention of founding a Teutonic university. Charles no doubt believed that many students from the

[1] I am quite aware of the fact that many German writers have denied that Charles had such a tendency. These writers have not, I think, disproved the assertions of Palacky.

neighbouring kingdom of Poland would visit the new university. These visits, however, almost ceased after the foundation of the University of Cracow. Other changes also occurred. Universities were founded in Germany, at Vienna, Heidelberg, and Erfurt. The number of German students at Prague decreased largely in consequence, but their influence continued as great as ever. This was due to the system of voting by "nations," which was not indeed a fundamental law of the university, but had been gradually and tacitly accepted. While the Germans became fewer in number, the Bohemian students became more numerous every year. The university had many benefices in its gift, a matter of the highest importance to the many penniless students of theology who frequented it. These benefices were of course bestowed in accordance with the system of vote by nations that prevailed in all matters concerning the university. The Bohemians were, therefore, generally excluded from livings situated in their own country and often endowed by their countrymen. It has often been stated that the analogy between the University of Prague and that of Paris established by the decree of Venceslas is false, as in Paris the four nations were the French, Normans, Picards, and English. On further reflection it, however, appears that the analogy is strikingly true. Though under different names the French, Norman, and Picard nations together represented the national indigenous element which possessed three votes, while the foreigners, that is to say the members of the English nation, which included Germans, Bohemians, and others, had one.

German writers have also enlarged on the material loss which the town of Prague suffered from the departure of German students. Such reflections prove an entire misconception of the feelings of the citizens of Prague at this stormy period. The native population of the city was inflamed by the most ardent religious and national enthusiasm, and was prepared to suffer and venture everything for a cause which it

believed to be sacred. The citizens indeed proved this a few years later by their splendid defence of the capital when it was attacked by an army of so-called crusaders, gathered together from all parts of Europe. It must also be stated that the continued residence of German students in Prague would at this period, in any case, have proved an impossibility. Overbearing as German students have shown themselves in that city, not only in the fifteenth century, their presence would have led to constant conflicts. Even the German citizens were somewhat later obliged to leave Prague, as the Praguers not unnaturally feared the presence of enemies in their camp. There was at that period of excitement no room within the walls of Prague for upholders of German supremacy and of the extreme claims of the Roman hierarchy.

As regards the university, it cannot be truthfully said that it lost its importance by becoming a national one. Indeed it became, as will be mentioned later, after the death of Hus, for a time the supreme authority in Bohemia on matters of religion, as most of the higher members of the Bohemian clergy were opposed to the cause of church-reform. The downfall of the University of Prague belongs to a far later period, that which followed the battle of the Bila Hora (White Mountain).

## CHAPTER V

### HUS AS LEADER OF HIS NATION

As soon as the German students had left Prague, the Bohemians, together with the Polish students who had remained in the city, hastened to obey King Venceslas's command. They elected a new rector, and though Hus had already held that office a few years previously, their choice naturally fell on him who had played so great a part in the recent events. Hus was now at the height of his political position. Venceslas was undoubtedly grateful to the man to whose action it was principally due that the University of Prague had discarded Pope Gregory. The queen and the Bohemian nobles treated him with greater favour than ever. He was the recognised leader of the university, and his popularity among the citizens of Prague was very great. His position with respect to the ecclesiastical authorities continued to be an undefined one, and indeed became constantly more difficult. An archiepiscopal decree had prohibited Hus from exercising ecclesiastical functions, but he continued to preach in the Bethlehem chapel. The congregation was very numerous, and the queen and many of the courtiers were frequently present. Present also were some less desirable visitors. Some of the parish priests of Prague, men who regarded Hus's preaching as a reproach to their own unedifying lives and were therefore his bitterest enemies, were often present at the sermons in the Bethlehem chapel. They thus hoped to gather materials for new accusations against him. We are told that the parish priest of St. Clements, one Protiva, was in the habit of assisting at Hus's sermons and taking notes which were to be used against the preacher. This was one

day brought to his notice by one of his friends. Hus had that day been preaching on the difference between the law of God and the command of men, comparing them to corn and chaff. What, he said, is corn but the law of God, what chaff but the command of men? Therefore will we cling firmly to the laws of God, but spurn the unlawful commands of men. Hus, who was here defending his conduct in continuing to preach contrary to the injunction of the archbishop, addressed Protiva, who was sitting immediately under the pulpit, in these words: "Note that down, cowled monk (*Kukliku*), and carry it to the other side," pointing to the Mala Strana, the part of Prague situated on the opposite bank of the river Vltava, where stood the archbishop's palace. Hus well knew that fresh attacks awaited him on the part of the parish priests, offended not only by his denunciations of vice and dishonesty, but perhaps yet more by the absolute purity of his life, which lent itself to comparisons unfavourable to their own way of living. Hus, however, was safe for the moment; not only because he enjoyed the favour of the king, but also because Archbishop Zbynek had, by continuing to support Pope Gregory, incurred the displeasure of the cardinals assembled at Pisa. As the archbishop and a large part of the Bohemian clergy continued to oppose their king's wishes in this matter, troubles broke out in Prague, and some priests known as supporters of Pope Gregory were attacked by the people. Popular demonstrations also took place before the palace of the archbishop. Zbynek, irritated both against the king and the national reform-party, placed the city of Prague and the surrounding country under interdict. Declaring that he was no longer safe at Prague, he left the city and retired to his castle of Roudnice, where he was followed by a large number of priests. The king was very indignant at the attitude of Zbynek, and also at the fact that he had taken away with him to Roudnice the treasures belonging to the tomb of St. Venceslas in the cathedral of St. Vitus. The citizens were animated by feelings

similar to those of their sovereign. Numerous attacks were made on the dwelling-places of the parish priests, many of whom were obliged to fly, generally (the chronicler states) followed by female companions. We have here again evidence of the almost universal immorality of the parochial clergy of Prague.

Alexander V. had meanwhile been elected pope (June 26, 1409) by the cardinals assembled at Pisa. Archbishop Zbynek still hesitated for some time, but he finally altered his views, and on September 2 recognised Alexander V. as legitimate pope. Zbynek's position in Bohemia had become untenable. It was hopeless for him to oppose at the same time the will of his sovereign, the wishes of the Bohemian people, and the decision of what had now become the dominant party in the Roman Church. Zbynek did not gain in popular esteem by this sudden transfer of his allegiance. Yet for the moment this step, which it was believed would put a stop to all internal strife in Bohemia, was received with great enthusiasm. *Te Deum* and mass were celebrated in all the churches of the capital. On the following day (September 3) the citizens were summoned by the big bell of the town hall to assemble near it under the clock-tower three times in the course of the day for the purpose of rejoicing. The whole city was illuminated in the evening, and the burgomaster, Peter Habartovic of the White Lion, with the town councillors, preceded by trumpeters, rode through the streets amid general rejoicings.[1]

This change of attitude on the part of the archbishop necessarily greatly affected the fate of Hus. From the moment of their rupture the archbishop, undoubtedly a good hater, had endeavoured to harm Hus in every manner. His principal weapon was of course the statement that Hus was a "Wycliffite"—now, particularly in Bohemia and Moravia, a general term of opprobrium, which was applied to all whom it

[1] Tomek, *History of the Town of Prague*, vol. iii.

was desired to accuse of heresy. The partisans of Rome, little acquainted with the works of Wycliffe, which, indeed, they were forbidden to read, had transformed the English divine into a monster of the infernal regions. Thus the Carthusian monk, Stephen of Dolein, tells us in his *Medulla Tritici* that when some one known to Stephen was one night reading Wycliffe's *Trialogus*, it appeared to him as if Wycliffe had rushed into the room, gnashing his teeth, reproaching him for not believing his statements and striking him heavily, while many spectators appeared to be present. He retired before the enraged fiend, but fortunately found on the floor a dungfork. He seized it, and with it struck his adversary so severe a blow that he fell to the ground. He then battered in his brains and killed him. The spectators praised God, and the victor, somewhat distressed by the manslaughter he had committed, was comforted by the spectators with the words: Fear not! the murder of this man involves no guilt.[1] Hus, it is almost needless to repeat, always admitted that he had deeply studied the works of Wycliffe and felt in sympathy

[1] This strange tale should be given in Stephen's own Latin words. He writes: " Andiant itaque Jesu Christi fideles quod referam. Factum est hoc tempore ante triduum ut certissime didici quod, dum quidam vir catholicus nomine et condicione haec scribenti cognitus scripta nefaria legeret, et relegeret in suo (Wycliffe's) *Trialogo* maxime de venerabili Sacramento Dominici corporis et etiam per insomnes plurimas noctes pluribus suspiriis et lachrymis molestissime ferret, et Divinam et Ecclesiae Sanctae tantam injuriam deplangeret: Accidit sibi ut intempeste matutinae Vigiliae agens idipsum paululum reclinato capite discretionis intuitu quievisset. Et ecce Magister ille diversorium illius fremens et iratus nimium ingrediens, non solum verbis durioribus perstrepens, sed et verberibus horribilibus circumcirca consedentibus plurimis, irruit in eum quae praediximus. Qui dum quasi infirmior non haberet unde vel quo sibi resisteret, irato cedens et retro, et retro se aspiciens, quasi a Domino sibi praeparatam vidit tridentem, jacentem furcam id est instrumentum quo fimus de stabulis et domibus solet purgari et ejici. Conversusque hanc arreptam illi in faciem valido ictu et in caput suum impegit, et dejecto eo usque ad cerebri effusionem concussit, manus confregit et penitus interfecit. Ad cujus spectaculum facto multorum fidelium laetabundo concursu, dicentibus et acclamantibus singulis, Benedictus Deus qui tradidit impium: dictum est victori singularis certaminis, perterrite de homicidio ne timueris; ex nece enim hujus hominis irregularitatem non incurres." (Stephanus Dolanensis, *Medulla Tritici*, *Pez Thesaurus Anecdotorum*, vol. iv. 2, pp. 246-247.)

with many of the views expressed in them, but he also always disclaimed the complete and exclusive dependence on Wycliffe which his detractors have attributed to him both during his lifetime and in more recent days.

The attempts of Archbishop Zbynek to enforce severer measures against Hus were not at first successful. As long as the archbishop opposed the cardinals assembled at Pisa, and the newly-elected pope Alexander V., he could expect no aid from the church. The adherents of Hus even brought complaints against Zbynek before Pope Alexander, who had indeed summoned Zbynek before his tribunal when the news of the submission of the Archbishop of Prague arrived. An immediate change took place. As Dr. Flajshans writes, the pope preferred as an ally the mighty archbishop to the humble preacher. The archbishop's officials now attacked Hus not only as a defamer of the clergy of Prague, but also as an adherent of Wycliffe. Wycliffe, as noted above, was to serve as an arm against Hus; he and his friends were to be stigmatised as favourers of the heretical views of the English reformer, as restless and dangerous men; thus would a stain cling to all their attempts to reform the church—attempts which the archbishop himself had formerly favoured and forwarded.[1]

Zbynek opened his new campaign by again referring to the accusations against Hus which the parish priest of Prague had already brought forward in the preceding year (1408). He demanded an explanation of the conduct of Hus, and stated that new complaints against him had been brought to his knowledge. The very curious document[2] which contains these accusations throws a strong light on the vast system of espionage which surrounded Hus long before he had been declared an enemy of the church. The parochial clergy of Prague were bent on the ruin of Hus at a time when he was

[1] Tomek, *History of the Town of Prague*, vol. iii. p. 475.
[2] Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 164-169.

still in high favour with the archbishop. No one who has taken the trouble to read this document will hesitate to attribute mainly to the jealousy and animosity of the parish priests of Prague the persecution from which Hus suffered from the beginning of his preaching to the moment when he perished at the stake. The document printed by Palacky contains marginal notes by Hus answering some of the accusations. They are very valuable, as the proceedings at the archbishop's court at which Hus appeared were secret, and they, therefore, are the only clue we have to Hus's defence. He himself no doubt attached great importance to them, and it is probable that the notes were written out by him from memory in 1414 before his departure for Constance, where he, as he knew, would have to face the same calumnies and accusations. Here only some of the accusations can be mentioned. It was stated that Hus had publicly declared that a priest being in a state of mortal sin could not administer validly the venerated sacrament of the body of Christ, nor dispense the other sacraments of the church. The note of Hus ran thus: "All those who attended my sermons well know that I preached the exact contrary, saying that a bad priest administers the sacrament in the same fashion as a good one, for it is the divine goodness that acts by means of a good or of an evil priest." Shortly afterwards followed another accusation, also referring to the then much discussed question of the validity of the sacraments when administered by unworthy priests. Hus's teaching on this vexed matter was always in accordance with that of the Roman Church. The informer Protiva, author of most of the statements concerning Hus, declared that he had made many of the remarks that were incriminated while preaching at St. Michael's Church. Hus replied that at the time mentioned he had not yet been ordained a priest, and had not yet begun preaching. Another accusation was, that when on the occasion of the drowning of John of Pomuk—an event that occurred ten years previously—the possibility was discussed in

the house of Venceslas the cupmaker, that Prague might be placed under interdict, Hus had said that there was no reason why the religious services in the whole kingdom should cease because of one man. The skill of the informer appears here. Hus had actually stated that neither because of the imprisonment of murder of himself or of any other man was it fitting that the whole kingdom of Bohemia should be deprived of the spiritual consolation of the sacraments. Hus was well aware of the terror which the word interdict inspired in the minds of mediæval citizens. He later left Prague voluntarily, to save the citizens from the consequences of the interdict.

It would be wearisome and indeed somewhat sickening to record the various other accusations, all of which, like those already mentioned, were founded on distorted remarks of Hus. One of the last points is, however, of interest. Hus was accused of having by his preaching caused discord between the Bohemians and the Germans. In reply he declared that he denied this, unless Bohemians and Germans had sought offence from an unjust cause; then it might be true. "Christ," he continued, "was the stumbling-block for those who believed not. He (Christ) knows that I love a good German better than a bad Bohemian, even if he be my own brother." Besides the principal denunciator Protiva, other priests had taken part in the drawing up of these accusations; among them was Michael, surnamed "*de causis*," whom Professor Tomek describes as a consummate liar. The denunciators were, however, successful. Hus was summoned to appear before the court of the archbishop. Though the proceedings were secret, we may safely conclude that his defence was in accordance with the notes, mentioned above, which he had made in answer to his accusers. When examined, he no doubt, as in the notes, appealed to his congregation with regard to what he had said on the then ever-recurring question of the validity of the sacraments when administered by a priest who was in a state of mortal sin.

However convincing and eloquent Hus's defence may have been, it remained unnoticed as well as unanswered by the archbishop. Zbynek sent to Pope Alexander V. an embassy furnished, as the chroniclers write, with many rich presents. The envoys stated that at Prague, in the whole kingdom of Bohemia, the margraviate of Moravia, and other neighbouring lands, the hearts of many had been corrupted by the heretical "articles" of John Wycliffe and particularly by his teaching with regard to the sacrament. As the shortest and safest remedy for these evils, it was suggested that in these countries preaching should be forbidden everywhere except in cathedral, collegiate, and parish churches, and in those belonging to monasteries. This proposal, aimed principally at Hus's Bethlehem chapel, was made by Dr. George Bor, a canon of the cathedral of Prague, and a strong opponent of church-reform. Matters had proceeded so rapidly that, when the embassy appeared before Pope Alexander V., that pontiff had, in consequence of the complaint of Hus's adherents previously mentioned, summoned the archbishop before his tribunal. However, Zbynek's submission to Pope Alexander had already produced a complete change. A bull issued on December 20, 1409, annulled the former summons of the archbishop, and instructed him to seek the advice of a council which was to consist of four magisters of theology and two doctors of canon law. After hearing the opinions of these men, the archbishop was to forbid all heretical preaching in virtue of the apostolical powers which the pope conferred on him for that purpose. He was further instructed to forbid preaching in all churches not belonging to the four categories mentioned above and to order all those who might possess copies of Wycliffe's writings to deliver them up that they might be removed "from the sight of the faithful."

In consequence of the bad condition of the roads during the wintry weather, the papal bull only reached Prague about March 9, 1410. It gave the archbishop all necessary power,

and he did not hesitate to use it. In accordance with the papal bull he appointed six councillors. They were all men strongly opposed to Wycliffe's doctrinal teaching and to church-reform—totally different matters, which it was the archbishop's policy to consider identical. In direct contradiction to the wording of the papal bull, Hus immediately appealed to the pope, stating that he (the pope) had been wrongly informed, as it had not yet been proved that any one in Bohemia had obstinately (*i.e.*, in opposition to the ecclesiastical authorities) defended the teaching of Wycliffe and, as Archbishop Zbynek had himself declared in 1408, that Bohemia was free from heresy. The councillors, undoubtedly formally in the right, ignored this appeal. It soon became known in Prague that their decision would be in accordance with the papal bull, that they would express themselves in favour of the destruction of Wycliffe's writings and of the suppression of preaching in the Bethlehem chapel. The university was, however, still on the side of Hus. At a general meeting on June 15, under the presidency of John Sindler, who had succeeded Hus as rector, the members of the university protested against the intention of burning Wycliffe's writings and appealed to the king, begging him to forbid this destruction, which would give great offence both to the kingdom and to the university.

Zbynek, now entirely in accordance with the papal see, was not to be deterred by protests of scholars whom as a true mediæval warrior he probably held in great contempt. He took immediate action. On June 16, the day after the meeting of the university, the customary summer convocation of the clergy took place at St. Vitus's cathedral. The papal bull, as well as the result of the deliberations of the theologians consulted by Zbynek, were read to the assembly. The decree of the councillors stated that eighteen of Wycliffe's works, among them the *Dialogus* and *Trialogus*, were heretical, and that all who possessed copies of these works were to bring

them to the archbishop's palace within six days. Under penalty of the loss of ecclesiastical benefices and of other punishment it was forbidden to maintain or teach the heresies of Wycliffe, particularly those referring to the sacrament of the altar. The archbishop, in agreement with his councillors, further declared that he would in case of need appeal to the secular authority of King Venceslas, and finally reiterated the injunction not to preach in churches other than those belonging to the categories that have already been mentioned.

This step was a fateful one—one of which Zbynek assuredly did not see the importance. All hope of a pacific reformation of the Bohemian Church on the lines indicated by Waldhauser and Milic ended here. The views expressed by Milic and Matthew of Janov differed but little from those of Hus, but the latter, inflamed with holy enthusiasm for the welfare of mankind and imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice, was not a man prepared to meekly retract words which he believed to have uttered in accordance with a divine command. He rejected blind obedience when it appeared to him that the authority of the church was used in an unlawful manner, prejudicial to the true interest of the church itself. It was not indeed the defence of Wycliffe's doctrines that appeared to Hus to have the greatest importance. What in Wycliffe's works could be authoritatively declared heretical he was ready to reject, though there was much in the teaching of the English divine that attracted him. But the prohibition of preaching in chapels involved a cessation of all attempts to reform the terribly demoralised clergy of Prague. In chapels only and in the Bethlehem chapel in particular free speech could be said to exist. The prohibition also put a term to all attempts on the part of Hus and his disciples to reach the lowly population of the city by preaching to them in a popular manner and in a language understood by all. Hus considered the prohibition as an indefensible attack on the freedom of God's word and as a deed opposed to Christ's own law. This appeared to him a

matter in which it was his duty to obey God rather than man.[1]

It was in accordance with these views that Hus preached at the Bethlehem chapel on June 22. Popular excitement was at its height and the crowd was immense. He declared that the recently deceased pope (the news of the death of Alexander V. had just reached Prague) had stated that there were in Bohemia many heretics, that is to say, men who obstinately opposed the teaching of Christ as contained in Scripture. This untruthful statement had been believed by the pope on the authority of Bohemian priests. Hus then referred to the intention of burning Wycliffe's works. These works, he contended, did not contain heretical statements only, but also much that was good. He further declared that he would appeal to the new pope against the archbishop's decree, and asked his congregation whether they would stand by him. All present cried: "We will stand by you." Hus concluded by declaring that he would not cease to preach even should he be driven from the land or perish in prison. He entreated the faithful to be steadfast, for the time might come when it would be necessary, according to the words of Moses, to gird on the sword and defend the word of God.

The effect of this sermon was very great, as may be imagined. The popular excitement did not escape the observation of King Venceslas, whose natural shrewdness made him a good judge of the feelings of the people of Prague, which he knew so well. The king strongly urged the archbishop to delay all further steps, and at last obtained his promise to do so, at least up to the time when the king's cousin, Margrave Jodocus of Moravia, should arrive in Prague. Jodocus had the reputation of being a man of moderate and enlightened views, and it was known that Hus had sent him a copy of his translation of Wycliffe's *Trialogus*. It was hoped that he would act as mediator. Hus employed this brief delay for the

[1] Tomek, *History of the Town of Prague*, vol. iii. p. 481.

purpose of preparing the appeal which he now sent to Pope John XXIII. He protested against the bull of Alexander based on untrue statements made from personal motives by Bohemian ecclesiastics. He also protested against the intended burning of Wycliffe's works, many of which were treatises on philosophy, logic, and other matters not connected with theology. He also claimed for the university the right of reading Wycliffe's other works, as they had, according to the regulations, to read also the works of Aristotle, Averroes, and other " heathens whose works teemed with heresies." Almost at the same moment the archbishop addressed to the " *diavolo cardinale*," now Pope John XXIII., a letter in which he denounced Hus as the originator of all troubles in Bohemia and as a defender of Wycliffe's. Zbynek then alluded to the sermon of Hus at the Bethlehem chapel on June 22, and begged the pope to order him to appear for judgment before the papal court.

Meanwhile the archbishop, as Margrave Jodocus did not arrive, determined to act without further delay. On July 16 he assembled the prelates and principal ecclesiastical dignitaries in the court of his palace, which was barricaded and guarded by a considerable armed force. A stake was erected in the middle of the court, and Wycliffe's books were placed on it. The archbishop then himself lighted the pile, and all present sang the *Te Deum* while the books were burning.

King Venceslas was on that day absent from Prague; he would otherwise undoubtedly have opposed by force the work of the archbishop. Zbynek himself appears to have felt that he had taken on himself a grave responsibility. Not feeling safe in Prague, he left the city immediately after the burning of the books, and retired to his castle of Roudnice. He there pronounced the sentence of excommunication against Hus. The fears of Zbynek were not altogether unfounded. There had sprung up among the people of Prague an intense hatred of the archbishop and the clergy—particularly the parish

priests, whose evil life caused much unhappiness among the citizens. The situation at Prague at this moment is quaintly and strikingly described by a contemporary chronicler.[1] After stating that in the year 1410 the books of Master John Wycliffe the Englishman were burnt in the courtyard of the archbishop's palace, the author writes: "Then a great storm arose and much strife between the king's courtiers and the canons and priests. Songs against the archbishop were sung everywhere in Prague. There was at that time much discord between the canons and Master John of Husinec. Some said that many other books besides those of Wycliffe had been burnt, and thus the people became enraged. Some took the part of the canons and some that of Hus. Henceforth there was great discord among the people. The choir boys who lived on the castle (the Hradcany) waylaid all passers-by who adhered to Hus, and when they saw one they seized him, dragged him into the common room, stripped him, and whipped him unmercifully with birchrods." This passage is curious also as showing that it was not only by the partisans of Hus that excesses were committed—as has been frequently stated. The latter were, however, generally stronger, and they prevented in most churches the publication of the sentence excommunicating Hus. As the chronicle quoted above relates, songs on the events of the day, mostly abusive of the archbishop, whose great ignorance was greatly exaggerated, were sung everywhere. One of these songs seems to have been very popular and obtained great popularity. It alluded to Zbynek's want of learning and ran thus:

> "Zbynek, bishop A. B. C.
> Burnt the books, but ne'er knew he
> What was in them written."[2]

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[1] *Stari Letopisove cesti* (Ancient Bohemian Chroniclers), edited by Palacky, iii. pp. 12-13.

[2] I quote this good though not literal translation from the late Rev. A. H. Wratislaw's *John Hus*, p. 141. The words are in the Bohemian original, "Zbynek, biskup Abeceda spalil knihy a neveda co jest v nich

Venceslas did his best to maintain order in his capital. He severely prohibited rioting in the streets and the singing of abusive songs. He also, with great fairness, requested the archbishop to indemnify those whose books had been seized and burnt. As a protest against the destruction of the writings of Wycliffe, Hus and his adherents, according to the academic customs of the time, held a great disputation in the large hall of the Carolinum college. The disputation, in which various speakers were to defend works of Wycliffe, began on July 27. Hus himself on that day spoke in defence of Wycliffe's book, *De Trinitate.* Hus's treatise, *De Libris Haereticorum Legendis*, written about this time, covers almost exactly the same ground, and we find in it the contents of Hus's speech. Hus in it strongly blamed the burning of Wycliffe's writings. These works at any rate contained much that was good, and their destruction had brought discord and trouble into the country. Even should these books have contained heretical opinions, they should not have been burnt. Otherwise might they have burnt also the work of Peter Lombard—to whom, as we know, Hus owed so much—or those of Aristotle. If, he continued, the doctors said that none should inquire but all should submit—a theory that has a strangely modern aspect—then they were worse than Jews and Pharisees. Christ conversed with the heretical Sadducees. Hus ended by declaring that he would not submit to the prohibition of preaching and that he would undauntedly face all dangers which might result from such a course. On the following days,

napsano." Professor Höfler, who had a very slight acquaintance with the Bohemian language, quoted the song from Cochlaeus's Latin history of the Hussite wars, where some distorted and meaningless words are supposed to render the Bohemian wording. These words Höfler thus translated into German: " Der Saumagen hat das Schöne verbrannt "—*i.e.*, " The pig burnt beautiful things." These words have not even the remotest resemblance to the meaning of the song, and Höfler merely intended to impute coarse language to the Bohemians. The matter is fully noticed by Dr. Nedoma in the *Journal of the Bohemian Learned Society* (*Vestnik spolecnosti nauk*), February 23, 1891. I allude to the matter here, as even recent English writers do not appear to have known how untrustworthy Höfler often was.

up to the 31st, the disputations continued, and several of Hus's principal adherents spoke in defence of various writings of Wycliffe.

Preaching at the Bethlehem chapel continued meanwhile. As the king had been informed that Hus had appealed to the pope, he ignored the excommunication pronounced by the archbishop and continued to extend his protection to Hus. When shortly afterwards Antony de Monte Catino arrived at Prague to announce officially the accession to the papal throne of Pope John XXIII., King Venceslas and Queen Sophia availed themselves of this occasion to enter into communication with the pope concerning the state of affairs in Bohemia. King Venceslas addressed one and Queen Sophia two letters to the pope, and each of the royal consorts wrote also to the college of the cardinals.[1] Queen Sophia undoubtedly had the question of the freedom of preaching very much at heart. In her first letter to the pope she strongly protested against the decree "which, contrary to the precepts of our Lord Jesus Christ, forbids the preaching of the word of God, except in monasteries and parish churches," and begged that "the Bethlehem chapel, which we consider most useful to us and the inhabitants of our kingdom for hearing the word of God, may not be deprived of its privilege." In her letter to the cardinals the queen again returns to the same subject, and declares that the decree limiting preaching to monasteries and parish churches, published under the influence of those who were opposed to evangelical teaching, was contrary to Scripture, as it was well known "that the word of God must not be fettered, but should be preached in hamlets, streets, houses, and indeed everywhere where the necessity arises." The influence of Hus is very evident in the letter mentioned last, and it gives a clue to the fact that shortly after the death of Hus the council of Constance decided to accuse Queen Sophia

[1] The five letters, all dated September 12 or 16, 1410, are printed by Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 409-413.

of heresy.[1] Venceslas on this occasion certainly acted in accordance with the feelings of the Bohemian people, if we except the baser part of the clergy, who believed that free preaching was favourable to church-reform—the thing which from selfish motives they detested more than all others. Thus Lord Lacek of Kravar, a high court official, and Nicholas of Potstyn, Lord of Zampach, wrote to Pope John protesting strongly against all attempts to limit the liberty of preaching. The town councils of the cities of Prague also added their protest. The prohibition of preaching in the Bethlehem chapel, they wrote, and the burning of Wycliffe's writings had caused hatred, quarrels, incendiarism, and murder among the citizens, who had with constant faith professed entirely the Catholic creed. The citizens of the old town did not omit to mention that they had vested interests in the matter, as the appointment of one of the two preachers in the Bethlehem chapel was in the gift of their town council.[2]

It is difficult to imagine the impression which these letters may have produced on Baldassare Cossa. He probably thought that the men of the north took matters of slight importance very seriously. Though no one who knows the absolute recklessness with which the theologians of the period of the schism levelled even the most monstrous accusations against their opponents will believe all that was said against the *diavolo cardinale* at Constance, yet it is not unfair to believe that he held no very firm opinions on matters of religion. The letters from Bohemia would, however, in any case have remained resultless. Before receiving them the pope, who was then residing at Bologna, had already entrusted

[1] Referring to these letters of Queen Sophia and others that will be mentioned later, Baron Helfert, a firm adherent of the Roman Church in his "*Hus und Hieronymus*," violently attacks Queen Sophia and the interference of women in politics generally. I have given a short account of this diatribe in my *Bohemia, a Historical Sketch*, p. 129, n. Baron Helfert is undoubtedly right in stating that Hussitism owed much to women.

[2] The letters of the nobles and citizens are printed by Palacky, *Documenta* pp. 413-415.

all the documents concerning the Bohemian controversy to Cardinal Odone Colonna (afterwards Pope Martin V.) and empowered him to decide the question. The cardinal, showing evidence here already of that hatred of Bohemia which was to be a prominent feature in his later life, immediately gave his decision in a sense entirely favourable to Archbishop Zbynek. A bull was forwarded to the archbishop, which in its purport was identical with that formerly sent by Pope Alexander. According to the wishes of the archbishop, Hus was summoned to appear immediately before the papal tribunal.

The Bohemian court was, not unnaturally, very indignant. Both the king and the queen again addressed letters of remonstrance to the pope and to the college of cardinals.[1] Though the king writes here in a very manly manner, and his letters convey a favourable impression, which is always the case when he writes under the influence of Queen Sophia, yet the queen's letters are more to the purpose, and, it may be added, more peremptory. The queen, being a friend of Hus, grasped more clearly than her husband what was the moral value of the man for whom she was interceding, and what that of Baldassare Cossa and his cardinals. In her letter to John XXIII. the queen complained of the legal proceedings at the papal courts which had caused disgust in the kingdom, of the incessant excommunications, of the prohibition of the preaching of the word of God. She specially interceded for the Bethlehem chapel, "in which she had frequently heard God's word," and begged that "John Hus, her faithful, devoted, beloved chaplain might, because of his many enemies, be relieved from the obligation of appearing in person before the pope." In her letter to the college of cardinals the queen begged the college "for the honour of God, for the salvation and quiet of the people, and for her own pleasure" to maintain in the possession of the Bethlehem chapel "her devoted

[1] The four letters are printed by Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 422-425.

and beloved chaplain, John Hus," and to relieve him from the obligation of appearing at the papal court. Otherwise—here the tone of the queen became somewhat menacing—her consort, King Venceslas, in union with herself and the barons of the kingdom, would take himself the necessary steps that all disturbances caused by foreign intervention should cease.

The position of Hus became in consequence of the papal summons a very difficult one. The dissuasion of his kind friends and adherents would not certainly have prevented him from proceeding to Italy had he believed it to be his duty to do so. Hus, however, firmly believed that no advantage would be obtained by the Bohemian Church and the party of church-reform should he appear before John XXIII. Acquainted with the character of that pontiff, he well knew what opinion he would form of one who had spoken so strongly against the vices and the evil life of the priests of Prague. He would, therefore, have to encounter the perils of the journey—he would have to pass through the territory of the Bishop of Passau, one of the most determined enemies of church-reform —without any probability of a satisfactory result. He would have to spend the money with which others were ready to supply him for the journey, but which, as a conscientious man, he believed should rather be given to the poor. He would have for a time to desert his congregation at Bethlehem. Jerome of Prague was then in the city, and Hus, though he showed him the greatest kindness, well knew what dangers the levity and thoughtlessness of Jerome might cause were he left uncontrolled.[1]

[1] Hus has himself very clearly expressed the objections to his journey to Italy. He writes: "Quis ergo color vel que ratio obedientiae ut persona citata per CCC milliaria, Papae incognita ab inimicis delata, tam anxie vadat per inimicos judices et testes consumat bona pauperum sumptuose vel non habeus sumptus vadat misere in siti et esurie et quis fructus comparitionis? Certe laboris a Deo injuncti negligentia, quoad propriam salutem et aliorum. Et nec ibi docebitur bene credere, sed litigare, quod non licet servo Dei. Ibi spoliabitur in consistoriis, in moribus sanctis refrigescit, ad impatientiam per oppressionem incitabitur et si non habuerit dare, condemnabitur, etiam habens justitiam. Et quod gravius est, compelletur Papam ut Deum flexis genibus adorare." (*De Ecclesia, capitulum* xxi.)

Hus therefore decided not to travel to Italy, but through the advice of his friends at the court of King Venceslas, and perhaps in accordance with the wise councils of Queen Sophia, he determined on sending representatives to the court of Pope John XXIII. He chose for this purpose his friend Master John of Jesenice, doctor of theology, who, according to some accounts, was at that moment at Bologna. Two younger theologians were to act as his assistants. Jesenice was at first able to report good news. On the suggestion of Archbishop Zbynek, who had also sent envoys to Bologna, John XXIII. had requested the University of Bologna to deliberate on the question whether the burning of Wycliffe's works had been justified. At a meeting of the magisters, at which representatives of the universities of Paris and Oxford were also present, it was decided almost unanimously that the burning was not justifiable. It was also declared that Wycliffe's writings on logic, philosophy, morals, and theology contained much that was true, good, and useful. This decision was undoubtedly a victory of Hus in his contest with the archbishop. Jesenice, seeing it in that light, caused the public notary to draw up an official document which, on the authority of the dominican Thomas of Udine, dean of the theological faculty, who had presided at the meeting, stated the decisions of the assembly as they are recorded above. A copy of this document [1] was forwarded to Prague.

Hus and his friends probably overrated the importance of this decision. Pope John XXIII., as previously mentioned, had entrusted to Cardinal Colonna the entire control of the investigations referring to the dissension between the archbishop and Hus. The cardinal lost no time in coming to a decision in a matter in which he believed the authority and particularly the worldly power of the church to be at stake. The rich gifts brought by the envoys of the archbishop no doubt confirmed his views. When, in February 1411, the term

[1] Printed by Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 426-428.

fixed for the appearance of Hus at the papal court in Bologna had elapsed, Cardinal Colonna, with the authorisation of the pope, pronounced the penalty of excommunication agaiust Hus because of his disobedience. The archbishop was immediately informed of this decision, and he gave the order that the papal decree should immediately be made known in all the parish churches of Prague. This was carried out on March 15 in all the parish churches except in that of St. Nicholas in the old town, where Master Stephen of Prachatice, an intimate friend of Hus, was parish priest, and in that of St. Benedict.

The events in Bohemia had meanwhile begun to attract greater attention in Europe than had been the case at first. It has been mentioned that representatives of the universities of Oxford and Paris had taken part in the deliberations at Bologna. Latin then being the universal language of intercourse between scholars of all countries, information as to matters of interest to the learned found their way from one country to another very rapidly. Great as is the distance between England and Bohemia, it was in England that the movement in favour of church-reform attracted more attention than in countries nearer to Bohemia. The reason is not far to seek. The movement which Hus had initiated in Bohemia pursued in many respects objects similar to those for which Wycliffe had formerly contended in England. In both countries the evils caused by the demoralisation of the clergy, its avarice and greed for worldly power, were equally obvious. In England as in Bohemia the more serious men wished the churches of their countries to be more independent of Rome, and desired, if necessary by force, to oblige the rich and luxurious clergy to lead a simpler life—one more similar to that of the founder of Christianity. It has been stated previously that attempts have often been made to exaggerate the dependence of Bohemia on the earlier movement in England. The strong and enthusiastic efforts of Milic and his successors to reform the Bohemian Church suffice to prove

that the Bohemian movement was largely an indigenous one. It may here be mentioned that one of the earliest writers who attempted to prove the dependence of the Bohemian reform movement was the notoriously mendacious historian Hajek of Libocan. He stated that two otherwise unknown Englishmen, "Jacob the bachelor" and "Conrad of Kandelburgk" (Canterbury), first spread anti-Roman views in Bohemia,[1] "By greatly exaggerating the English influence on the foundation of Hussitism and stigmatising it as a foreign movement, Hajek, as he well knew, greatly injured the Hussites; for the intense national feeling that has always animated the Bohemians has produced among them an often exaggerated distrust of foreign interference."[2] Though the influence of England on Bohemia has been exaggerated, it is certain that the Bohemian Church in its struggle against Rome found sympathy in England at an early period. On September 10, 1410, Hus received a letter from an English adherent of Wycliffe that caused great commotion among the little community of Bethlehem. It was long difficult to ascertain the name of the writer of this letter which in different MSS. appears as Richard Fitz, Richardus Vitze, and Richard Wichewitze. It has, however, now been ascertained that the writer was Richard Wiche, a Lollard, mentioned by Foxe,[3] who was executed in 1439, and whose memory became so popular that a decree prohibiting pilgrimages to the spot where he had been executed was published. Richard Wiche in his letter[4] states that he greatly rejoiced at the news that they (the Bohemians) also walked in the path of truth. He had heard that they also had suffered tribulations, but—Wiche writes—"Let us seek comfort in our Lord God and His immense kindness, believing firmly that it will not allow us, God's workers, to be deprived

[1] See my *History of Bohemian Literature*, pp. 304-309.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 409.
[3] *The Acts and Monuments of John Fox*, vol. iii. p. 702 (edition of 1837).
[4] Printed by Höfler, *Geschichtschreiber der Hussitischen Bewegung in Bohmen*, vol. ii. p. 210.

of goodness if we, as it is our duty, love God with our whole hearts; for adversity would not prevail among us, did not iniquity rule. Therefore, let no tribulation or suffering for Christ's sake cast us down, for we know for certain that whom the Lord God deigns to receive as His sons, those He chastises." Later Wiche writes, addressing Hus: "You, Hus, beloved brother in Christ, are indeed unknown to me by face, but not by faith and love, for the whole surface of the earth would not suffice to separate those whom the love of Christ effectually joins. Take comfort in the grace that has been given to thee. Preach the truth by word and example and recall whom thou canst to the path of truth, for it is not because of vain censures and antichristian fulminations that the evangelical truth should be concealed. . . ." Wiche's letter gives evidence of his surprising knowledge of the state of affairs in Bohemia and of his acquaintance with the names of the men who were playing a prominent part in the Bohemian reform movement. Thus he sends at the end of his letter greetings to all faithful lovers of God's law and particularly to Hus's "helper in evangelical work, Jacobellus." This refers to the famed Master Jacob, or Jacobellus of Stribro (in German, Mies), who played a great part in the Hussite movement during the last years of the life of Hus and after his death.

A letter from so distant a country as England naturally was received with great enthusiasm by the congregation of Bethlehem. It cannot be better described than in the words of Hus contained in the letter which he wrote in answer to that of Wiche.[1] "Your letter," he wrote, "which descended on us as from the Father of Light, strongly inflamed the minds of the brethren in Christ; for it contains so much sweetness, power, strength, and consolation that if by Antichrist all other writings were swept away into a chasm, it would for the faithful in Christ be sufficient to obtain salvation. While revolving in my mind the pith of your letter and its vigour I

[1] Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 12-14. The letter is also printed by Höfler.

said before many men while preaching—and I think about ten thousand people must have been present—' Behold, dearest brethren, what interest the faithful preachers of Christ in foreign parts take in your salvation, they who are ready to pour out their hearts, if they can but maintain you in the law of the Lord Christ,' and I added: ' Behold our dearest brother Richard, the fellow-labourer of Master John Wycliffe in his evangelical work, has written to you so comforting a letter that, if I had no other Scripture, I should risk my life for this message of Christ, and would do so with His help.' The faithful in Christ were so inflamed by your message that they begged me to translate it for them into the language of our country." In a later part of the letter Hus begs Wiche to pray for him, and rejoices that through his (Wiche's) efforts Bohemia had already received so much good from blessed (*benedicta*) England. Interesting though Hus's letter is, it is too long to quote in its entirety, but I may notice a passage in which he refers to the great strength which the movement for church-reform had already acquired in Bohemia. He writes: " Know, dearest brother, that our people will hear nothing but Holy Scripture, particularly the evangels and epistles, and whenever in a city or town, cottage or castle, a preacher of holy truth appears, the people flock together, despising the evilly-disposed clergy." It is evident that these ten thousand people mentioned by Hus could not find room in the Bethlehem chapel; no doubt many, as had formerly been the case during the sermons of Milic, assembled near the doors of the church, trying as far as possible to catch the preacher's words.

On the next occasion on which Hus came into contact with Englishmen, they met as adversaries, not as allies. But before dealing with this incident, I must return to the litigation between Hus and the archbishop, which was still pursuing its weary course. The reasons are not far to seek. Pope John XXIII., to whose mind Hus's austere views must have appeared even more objectionable than absurd, naturally

by Jacques Lemoine

wished at almost any price to silence a preacher of unwelcome truths. He was not, however, an entirely free agent. Though the luxurious and free-living clergy of Bohemia instigated him by word and gift to accelerate the procedure against the Bohemian reformer, the cunning *diavolo cardinale* knew that he couldn't risk to offend King Venceslas. The election of Pope Alexander V. had not, as had been thought, ended the schism. Benedict XIII. and Gregory XII. still had many adherents, and among those of the last-named pontiff still remained Sigismund, King of the Romans and King of Hungary, brother of King Venceslas and, as the latter was childless, heir to the Bohemian throne. In 1410 Venceslas had by the death of the Count Palatine Rupert been freed from a rival claimant to the crown of Germany, but his own treacherous younger brother Sigismund had been chosen as king by some of the German electors. Others had chosen Jodocus of Moravia, a cousin of Venceslas, as their ruler. It appears probable that after the death of Rupert Venceslas would again have been universally recognised as King of the Romans had it not been that the protection which he afforded to Hus was generally known. The ecclesiastical electors thus became his natural enemies. It appeared possible for a moment that he would play the part which a century later the Elector of Saxony played with regard to Luther. The weaknesses and follies of Venceslas, which even those who know how greatly the king has been maligned must regretfully admit, prevented him from ever playing such a part.

The Christian world was thus in the strange position of having at the same time three popes and three Kings of the Romans. Of these Sigismund and the former *diavolo cardinale*, now Pope John XXIII., were by far the most important, and it must be admitted that never have two men of baser character claimed to rule over the Christian world.[1] While

[1] Dr. Flajshans (*Mistr Jan Hus*) hardly exaggerates when he writes, "Sigismund was cruel and sensual, perjured and frivolous, rapacious and

thus the political situation obliged John XXIII. to work cautiously at the undoing of Hus, the latter also considered it his duty to continue the negotiations with the Holy See. He had begun these negotiations on the advice of the King and Queen of Bohemia, and considering himself, as he did to the end of his life, a true member of the Catholic Church, he believed that he had the right of placing his views before the papal court.

King Venceslas was greatly irritated because Archbishop Zbynek had by order of the pope caused the decree pronouncing the ban against Hus to be read publicly in the churches of Prague. The king's principle during the protracted disputes had been to maintain that the Bohemian Church should settle its own differences within the country, and that the intervention of foreigners should be eliminated as far as possible. To this principle Venceslas adhered with a tenacity that was rare with him. He had shortly after the burning of Wycliffe's works requested the archbishop to refund the value of these books to those who had been deprived of them. Archbishop Zbynek had tacitly ignored the royal command, and this incurred the wrath of the ever-irritable king. Venceslas now decreed that certain estates and houses in Prague belonging to the archbishop and other prelates who had taken part in the burning of Wycliffe's books should be confiscated, and their revenue employed to indemnify those who had been deprived of their books. The carrying out of this order was entrusted to the magistrates of the towns of Prague. Recent changes in the constitution of these municipalities had given the national party a majority in them, and the king's orders were immediately obeyed. The archbishop, who had again retired to his castle of Roudnice on May 2, 1411, sent a letter

dissolute, fierce and pusillanimous, a bye-word and object of horror to the Bohemians, hated and despised by the Germans, a warning to all rulers. His companion John XXIII., lewd and murderous, a simonist and an infidel, was a true comrade for Sigismund in all evil deeds, a warning lesson to all future popes."

to the city magistrates, protesting strongly against these confiscations, and stating that the citizens had forcibly possessed themselves of church property. A term of three days was given them within which they were to restore the confiscated property to the church. As no notice was taken of this letter the archbishop pronounced the sentence of excommunication on all the magistrates and town-officials—fifty persons in all—who had taken part in the execution of the royal order. As all these persons belonged to the national or reform party, no notice was taken of the archbishop's decree. Zbynek then had recourse to an extreme step which he had already taken once two years before. He proclaimed the interdict over the town of Prague and its immediate neighbourhood. As two years previously, this measure failed to cause the panic which in mediæval times was generally connected with the interdict; perhaps its short duration prevented its producing the usual effect. Hus and the other priests favourable to church-reform continued to hold religious services and to preach as usual. The disputations at the university proceeded in the usual manner. It is a proof of the slight importance which was attached to the interdict on this occasion that we find Hus and his friends occupied in drawing up the regulations for a college of students that was to be founded in connection with the Bethlehem chapel. A college for students had in 1397 been founded by Queen Hedwiga of Poland, but of the curators whom she had then appointed only Kriz—known to us as the founder of the Bethlehem chapel—was then alive. He also was of a very advanced age and he did not live to hear of the bitter, but glorious death of his old friend Hus. The latter advised Kriz to take the necessary steps to render possible the continuation of this richly endowed foundation, which was then housed in the "Jerusalem" buildings sanctified by the memory of Milic. It was arranged that eleven students of theology, belonging to the Bohemian nationality, should there receive

a free education. The college naturally became a centre for the friends of church-reform, and it was understood that the preachers of the Bethlehem chapel should be chosen from its members. Venceslas Kriz, son of the founder of Bethlehem, appears to have nominated the first scholars of the reorganised college. We find among them the name of Peter of Mladenovic, the disciple and biographer of Hus, whose account of the last sufferings and death of his master has been translated into many languages and read by countless people to whom the name of Mladenovic is unknown.

While the more pious and enthusiastic priests drew closer to Hus and closer to each other, some more worldly members of the clergy of Prague began to desert Hus—often to become afterwards his most venomous enemies. Some of these men had during the disputations at the university gladly taken part in the defence of Wycliffe's teaching, and had even upheld some opinions that Hus, never an unconditional adherent of Wycliffe, had not sanctioned. These men were, however, strongly opposed to all innovations that might limit the liberty, or rather licence, of the clergy of Prague. Besides the spy Protiva, always an opponent of Hus, Stanislas of Znoymo and Stephen Palec, formerly a friend of the Bohemian reformer, now became his bitter enemies. Palec stated in a letter [1] that the writings of Wycliffe were indeed delightful, but that he very much doubted whether any of the Bohemian priests would suffer death for the truth. He preferred, he said, a faith which would allow him to go safely anywhere. This mean letter, as Mr. Wratislaw rightly calls it, was no doubt the result of the great physical fear which Palec had felt when detained at Bologna. This does not, however, excuse the animosity and rancour with which he pursued those whose lofty thoughts raised them to a height to which his mean and cowardly nature could not attain. All personal relations between Hus and Palec ceased at this period, and Hus ex-

[1] Printed in the late Rev. A. H. Wratislaw's *John Hus*, p. 181.

pressed his opinion in the often-quoted words: Palec is my friend; truth is my friend; both being friends, it is saintly to give preference to truth.

Archbishop Zbynek was far too shrewd a man to think that supporters such as Protiva, Palec, and Michael, surnamed de causis, a German priest of evil repute, notorious as an enemy of Hus, would avail him in his struggle with Venceslas. He knew that he had in the king a dangerous enemy. Venceslas was deeply impressed by the dangerously great power of the clergy, in whose hands a third part of the soil of Bohemia then was. Zbynek therefore decided to make his peace with the king. Though there is hardly sufficient evidence to allow a positive affirmation, it is at least very probable that the astute *diavolo cardinale* advised Zbynek in this sense. Jodocus of Moravia had died very shortly after his election as king. There therefore remained as claimants to the throne only the brothers Venceslas and Sigismund. John XXIII. could not risk offending either of these princes before he had silenced the popes Gregory and Benedict—a thing he hoped shortly to do. Through the mediation of Rudolph, Duke of Saxony, and with the assent of several foreign dignitaries who were then in Prague, it was agreed that the whole dispute between Hus and the archbishop should be settled by arbitration. The king was himself to act as arbitrator, and was to have as his assistants Duke Rudolph of Saxony, Stibor Count of Transylvania, who was then at Prague, and Lacek of Kravar, formerly master of ceremonies to Venceslas, but now acting as his representative ("margrave") in Moravia. Both parties accepted this agreement, which practically conferred on Venceslas unlimited power to act as arbitrator. Hus thought it well that the university should be consulted on the matter, and that body gave its full assent, stipulating only that the king's decision alone should be absolute, in case the appointed councillors should have left Prague before judgment had been given. At the same time,

the archbishop assembled numerous prelates in his palace in the Mala Strana[1] and informed them that he had accepted the arbitration of the king. Venceslas acted with great prudence in this matter. Besides the coadjutors who had already been appointed, he consulted also several other dignitaries, both laymen and priests. The result of their deliberations was, on July 6, 1411, formulated in an agreement which under more favourable circumstances might have restored to Bohemia the peace which that country so urgently required. It was decided that the archbishop should submit to the king as his lord and then become reconciled to him. He was also to write to the pope stating that he knew of no heresies in the Bohemian kingdom, but only of dissensions between himself and Hus, a matter regarding which the king was endeavouring to mediate. The archbishop was also to beg the pope to absolve those against whom he had pronounced the sentence of excommunication, and Zbynek was himself to absolve those on whom he had pronounced that sentence and also to revoke the interdict on the city of Prague. Both parties were to desist from the lawsuits which they had begun at the papal courts, and recall their representatives there. The king was to take council of the bishops, doctors, prelates, temporal princes, nobles, and squires[2] concerning the existence of heresies or vices among either laymen or priests, and eventually on the advice of his spiritual and temporal councillors to extirpate and punish such offences. The revenues and annuities which had been taken from the priests were to be returned to them, and those priests who had been imprisoned were to be released. All the rights and privileges previously possessed by the clergy, the university, the lords and squires were guaranteed to them, and it was stipulated that the church should not attempt to encroach on the temporal power. It was finally

[1] The "small quarter" of Prague, situated on the left bank of the Vltava (Moldau) river.

[2] In Bohemian, "zeman." The "zeman" may be described as a member of the lesser nobility or country gentry.

declared by the archbishop that he had believed that the municipalities had on their own authority, and not by order of the king, seized church property. Having now been informed of the contrary, he wished to raise no further complaints against the citizens.[1]

This sensible and business-like document, which certainly contained the germ of a permanent agreement, has been little noticed by historians. It is scarcely uncharitable to suggest that this silence is due to the blind disparagement of King Venceslas which we find in all the works of Roman Catholic writers as well as in those of some German Protestants. The statement contained in this document that it was the duty of the rulers to suppress vices and heresies foreshadows the Hussite period, where we find similar enactments in the Articles of Prague, the compacts, and elsewhere. At the time when the agreement mentioned above was drawn up, it was also settled that Archbishop Zbynek should send to Pope John XXIII. a letter interceding for Hus. A draft of such a letter was actually drawn up, but the letter was never sent. This caused renewed bitterness. The archbishop appeared to act in a half-hearted manner, and Venceslas, impatient by nature, soon again became incensed against the ecclesiastical dignitaries of Bohemia. Hus meanwhile, relying on his firm conviction that he had spoken and written nothing contrary to the true Catholic faith, again wrote to Pope John. He again affirmed that he was a true Catholic and denied ever having stated that the material substance of bread remained in the sacrament after communion or having said that a priest in the state of mortal sin could not administer the sacraments validly. These accusations had been frequently raised by Palec and Michael de causis, who believed or pretended to believe that if they proved that any book of Wycliffe which Hus admitted to have read contained a statement contrary to the teaching of the church, this was a sufficient proof that

[1] Tomek, *History of the Town of Prague*, vol. iii. pp. 494-495.

Hus himself was a heretic. Hus read this letter to the assembled members of the university, who entirely approved of it, and it was decided that as a token of this approbation the seal of the university should be affixed to the letter. It is probable that about this time Venceslas also wrote to Pope John XXIII. again praising Hus and interceding for him.

The hope for a peaceful settlement disappeared almost as rapidly as it had arisen. The archbishop soon considered that he had new causes to complain of the king and his courtiers. It cannot be denied that Venceslas was during his whole life hostile to the higher clergy of Bohemia, though his attitude towards Hus proves that he honoured and respected a pious and virtuous priest. Zbynek complained that some of the royal courtiers had interfered with his archiepiscopal rights and demanded an audience to bring his grievances before the king. On his refusal Zbynek again declared that he was no longer safe at Prague, and left the city only a few weeks after the agreement had been made. The archbishop first proceeded to Litomysl, the residence of John, surnamed the "iron," bishop of the city. The iron bishop was known as a bitter enemy of King Venceslas and a notorious simonist. He was naturally and from selfish reasons a strong opponent of church-reform. The iron bishop played a considerable part in the life of Hus. It was at his instigation that the wealthy Bohemian priests at the time of Hus's departure for Constance collected a large sum of money to procure evidence against him. Hus always believed that the Bishop of Litomysl, with the spies and informers who were in his pay, contributed largely to his condemnation at Constance. In the Hussite wars the iron bishop became notorious through his excessive cruelty and, as the Hussite leaders were but too ready to follow his example, the Bishop of Litomysl bears no slight responsibility for the cruelty and bitterness, exceptional even among religious wars, which

marks the warfare between the Bohemians and the so-called crusaders. The counsels of the iron bishop were not, therefore, likely to have a conciliatory effect on Zbynek. He addressed from Litomysl a letter to King Venceslas containing many complaints, of which some were perhaps justified, many certainly unfounded. He also stated that he was going to visit King Sigismund of Hungary, the treacherous younger brother of Venceslas, and even threatened to induce Sigismund, who always coveted his brother's kingdom, to invade Bohemia. These plots or threats were not destined to lead to any result. Archbishop Zbynek died at Presburg on September 28, 1411, while on his way to Sigismund's court. Thus Archbishop Zbynek, a man who had ascended the archiepiscopal throne of Prague with the best intentions, ended his life almost as a traitor to his country and his king. A man of little intelligence and less learning, he was in spite of his good qualities quite unfitted for the position in which he was placed at a most difficult moment. Hus, mindful of his good intentions and of the kindness once shown to him by Zbynek, expressed great sorrow when he heard of the archbishop's death.

Zbynek's death was followed by a brief moment of calm, preceding the storm, greater than all former ones, that was shortly to break out. Only one incident belonging to this period is recorded by the contemporary chroniclers, and has ever since found its way into all works dealing with Hus, though it had little influence on the main current of the events. Shortly after Zbynek had left Prague two English envoys arrived there also on their way to Hungary, where they had a diplomatic mission. These men were Sir Hartung van Clux,[1] one of the most trusted councillors of Henry IV. and of his son, and John Stokes, licentiate of Cambridge. The object of their mission was to conclude an alliance between England

[1] The un-English name of this English agent has puzzled many writers. Sir Hartung Clux was of Flemish origin, and a trusted agent of King Henry IV. and Henry V. The latter conferred on him the Order of the Garter. (See Lenz, *König Sigismund und Heinrich V. von England*, pp. 31-37.)

and Sigismund, King of Hungary. The news of the arrival of the Englishmen soon reached the hospitable citizens of Prague and the Englishmen were invited to a banquet by the rector of the university. Sir Hartung, probably aware of the theological strife then raging at the university, politely declined the invitation, but when John Stokes, evidently a novice in matters of diplomacy, was questioned as to the cause of the refusal, he plunged boldly into the Wycliffe controversy. He publicly declared that whoever should read the works of Master John Wycliffe, or should study them, even if he had the best intentions and the firmest faith, must in course of time become involved in heresy. Hus, always zealous for what he believed to be truth, traversed Stokes's foolish statement and challenged him to a public disputation at the university in the manner then customary. This challenge Stokes declined, alleging that he had come to Bohemia on diplomatic business, being on his way to the court of King Sigismund. Characteristically, Stokes, who was either very little versed in the ways of diplomacy, or irritated by the " Lollard " movement which, he thought, he had discovered in Prague, described in his letter King Sigismund as " Dei gratia regem Ungariae, nec non ad regem Romanorum electum unicum." Venceslas still claimed to be King of the Romans, and the words of Stokes were bound to give grave offence to the King of Bohemia and his court. Though declining the challenge for the moment, Stokes, however, made the somewhat suspicious suggestion that a disputation should take place later either in Paris or at the papal court. It was probable in the former, and certain in the latter case that a Bohemian who attempted to uphold Wycliffe's views there would never have returned to his own country. Stokes, belonging to the period of reaction against Lollardism in England, appears to have been a thorough ultramontane, if we can apply the word to so remote a period. At Constance he attacked Hus and wished to produce as evidence against him a book that he had found at

Prague, which, he said, contained the views of the Lollards and which, he had been told, might have been written by Hus. The book, as was proved, had not been written by Hus, nor had he had any part in it. Though Hus was not able to enter into a disputation with Stokes, he yet thought it his duty to reply to the statement which Stokes had made. In a speech, which has been preserved, he justly stigmatised the absurdity of those who wished to declare heretics all who had read Wycliffe's books. He acutely pointed out that Wycliffe had been hated by many, and particularly by the higher clergy, because he had blamed their vices and admonished them to lead honest and blameless lives.

Hus's dispute with Stokes was no doubt soon forgotten in view of the weighty events that followed at a short interval. Through the death of Zbynek the important and valuable archiepiscopal see of Prague had become vacant. Candidates were numerous, and at a period when simony was almost universal in the Roman Church, bribery was rampant. The election at first proceeded slowly, and fears were expressed that Baldassare Cossa might appoint a new archbishop. The king therefore requested the canons to come to a decision, and of the twenty-four candidates Albert of Unicov, physician to the king, was on October 29, 1411, unanimously chosen as archbishop. A contemporary chronicler writes:[1] "After him (Zbynek), Albik (Albert) a great master of the medical sciences became archbishop. He was a German by birth, born at Unicov. The people said that he had bought the archbishopric, for he had much money. He was, however, a very niggardly and miserly German, and would not have any knights or pages around him, that he might not be obliged to give them money." The well-meaning king, to whose influence the election of his former court-physician was largely due, no doubt sincerely believed that Albert of Unicov would be able to establish a quieter condition in Bohemia. The new

[1] *Ancient Bohemian Chroniclers*, vol. iii. p. 14.

archbishop shared the king's desire for tranquillity, and perhaps under more favourable conditions their efforts might have been successful. Albik or Albert of Unicov, then about fifty-four years of age, could already look back on a long career. He had begun life as a law-student at Prague, and had obtained academic honours. As was often the custom of scholars at that period, he afterwards travelled for a considerable period. He spent some time at the University of Padua, where he obtained the degree of doctor of law. Somewhat later he applied himself to the study of medicine and acquired the reputation of being one of the greatest physicians of his time. He had recently become a widower, was the father of several children, and had taken vows shortly after the death of his wife. He had through his medical practice acquired a very large fortune, and he accepted the dignity of archbishop mainly by wish of the king, with whom he was on terms of intimacy. The reference in the chronicle quoted above to the large sum Albik had spent to become archbishop refers to a very large gift which he made to Pope John XXIII. That pontiff, as Dr. Tomek writes, would without large payment never have renounced his claim to appoint a successor to Archbishop Zbynek. That the claim of Albik prevailed over even that of the rich and unscrupulous Bishop of Litomysl, who was also a candidate, is probably not due to his greater munificence. It is an appalling proof of the universal prevalence of simony at this period that the contemporary chroniclers always allude to bribery as having decided elections among the clergy, and hardly seem to take other motives into account. In the present case it is, however, very probable that King Venceslas may have used his great influence to prevent the election of his bitter enemy, John " the iron," to the archbishopric of Prague.

It was natural to hope that the election of Albik, an elderly, conciliatory, opulent, well-intentioned man, whose home life was irreproachable, would at least cause a respite in the theo-

logical strife which was absorbing all interest in Bohemia. Events in distant Italy brought on a crisis which was more serious than any of the former disturbances in Bohemia. It has already been mentioned[1] that, immediately after his election to the papal throne, John XXIII. strove with his entire indomitable energy to carve out for the papacy, or rather, perhaps, for himself, a temporal dominion in Italy. Here, however, the *diavolo cardinale* found a dangerous antagonist in Ladislas, King of Naples, an adventurer of a type somewhat similar to his own. Claiming to uphold the cause of Pope Gregory XII., Ladislas invaded the papal states and menaced Rome, where Pope John had then established his residence. The pope therefore decided to proclaim a crusade against his Italian rival. The name of crusade, so venerable at its origin, had long been perverted to give a false impression of sanctity to very unholy and worldly warfare waged by ambitious popes against temporal rulers. It was only the complete and ignominious failure of the so-called crusades against Bohemia which caused the name to fall into oblivion.

Bohemia had in earlier days, because of its geographical position, not greatly attracted the papal tax-gatherers. There was, however, no hope that such an exemption would continue at a time when the papal crown was claimed by three rival pontiffs, each of whom could only rely on the financial support of a comparatively limited extent of country. On December 2, 1411, a decree of John XXIII. declared Pope Gregory XII. and his ally Ladislas, King of Naples, to be heretics, and granted a plenary indulgence to all who took part in the war against Ladislas or contributed to the expenses of the campaign. It has often been stated that this was at that period a very usual occurrence, and that it is surprising that Hus should have raised objections to such a decree. Whatever may have been the case in other countries, in Bohemia such proceedings were exceptional. This fact, unnoticed by foreign writers, is

[1] See p. 98.

duly recorded by the Bohemian historians. The only precedent for the public sale of indulgences had occurred in the year 1393. "In Bohemia," Professor Tomek writes, "the unhappy recollection of the sale of indulgences in the year of grace 1393 was still vivid, and the archiepiscopal consistory thought it necessary to publish special regulations to prevent the repetition of the more crying abuses that had then occurred." Archbishop Albik also strictly prohibited the taxing of the people in the confessional, that is to say, their being told during confession how much they would, according to their rank and fortune, have to pay for an indulgence—a custom that had been general in 1393.

The orders given by Archbishop Albik and the consistory certainly tended to avoid all scandal as far as possible. This was naturally to be feared in a city where the teaching of Hus and his forerunners had developed a somewhat puritanic spirit. The papal representative, however, who now arrived at Prague, Venceslas Tiem, Dean of Passau, was utterly unfit for the difficult task which he had undertaken. His behaviour, like that of Texel a century later, was bound to cause trouble. Tiem took little notice of the restrictions that had been imposed on him. He carried on his traffic in divine indulgences in the manner which he believed would give him the largest profit and enable him to send the largest sums to Italy. To simplify matters, he began to farm out archdeaconries, deaconries, and even single churches to priests who, acting as contractors, had to consign to him a fixed sum, while they were at liberty to obtain as great a profit as they could by the sale of the indulgences. "Naturally, worthy priests were not suitable for such an unholy trade, and the business thus fell into the hands of priests who were misers or gamblers, lived in concubinage, or practised other vices of the period. These men bargained shamelessly with the faithful in the confessionals and committed infamous actions of every description." [1]

[1] Tomek, *History of the Town of Prague*, vol. iii. pp. 508-509.

The principal places of sale in Prague, the profits of which Tiem had reserved for himself, were the three most important churches of the city, the church on the Vysehrad, the Tyn church in the old town, and St. Vitus's cathedral on the Hradcany. In the last-named church the box in which the offerings were to be deposited was placed near the altar of St. Vitus, where the people mostly congregated.

It was impossible that this public simony should not arouse discontent and indignation among the citizens of Prague. One of the principal subjects of the sermons of the priests who upheld church-reform had for some time been the abuse of indulgences. Tiem had arrived at Prague in May, 1412, and early in June Hus invited all members of the university to take part in a disputation that was to be held in the large hall of the Carolinum college on June 17. The question to be discussed was: Whether it was permissible and expedient according to the law of Jesus Christ, (whether it was) to the glory of God, the salvation of the Christian people, that the bulls of the pope concerning the raising the cross against Ladislas, King of Apulia, and his accomplices be commended to the faithful in Christ?"[1] The meeting was somewhat stormy, and several among the theologians, though not entirely approving of the sale of indulgences as it was carried on in Prague, yet declared that they would not oppose the papal decree. Stanislas of Znoymo and Stephen Palec spoke in favour of blind submission to all decisions of the pope. Hus spoke quietly and firmly; he relied mainly on biblical quotations, and maintained that Christ alone, not priests, could forgive sins. On the same side as Hus spoke also Master Jerome of Prague, who did not, however, follow the example of moderation given by Hus. His speech, perhaps for that reason, obtained greater applause from the young students,

[1] The words of the Latin original ran thus: "Utrum secundum legem Jesu Christi licet et expedit pro honore Dei, et salute populi Christiani et pro commodo regni bullas papae de erectione crucis contra Ladislaum regem Apuliae et suos complices Christi fidelibus approbare."

who accompanied him back to his dwelling amidst great enthusiasm. The moderation displayed by Hus during the discussion on indulgences—a subject on which almost every one will at the present day admit that he was right—is all the more worthy of praise because almost at the same time the papal court had definitively and irrevocably declared itself hostile to his views. The parish priests, always, as has been frequently noted, bitter enemies of church-reform and of Hus in particular, thinking that the new archbishop was too lenient, again appealed to the pope. In the course of the year 1412 they sent to the papal court two further documents[1] containing the complaints against Hus that have already been enumerated. They added, however, to their old grievances one new one, stating that Hus had blamed the pope's action in granting indulgences and remittance of sins to those who took part in the warfare against "Ladislas, King of Apulia, and Angelus Correr, who with sacrilegious daring calls himself Gregory XII." Together with Hus some of his principal disciples were denounced in these letters. The parish priests were this time more successful than they had been in their former attacks on Hus. They had secured a wily and utterly unscrupulous agent at the papal court. This was one Michael, a German of Nemecky Brod (Deutschbrod), some time parish priest at St. Adalbertus's in Prague.[2] Michael was afterwards by Pope John XXIII. appointed advocate in matters of faith (*procurator de causis fidei*), and was therefore generally known as "Michael de causis." His reputation was of the worst. Neglecting his parish duties, he endeavoured to obtain money by good or bad means.[3] He offered King Venceslas to improve the working of the royal mines at Jilov, but absconded with the money that had been entrusted to him. He fled to the pope and gained a living by acting as advocate at the papal law-courts. Through the influence of the astute Michael,

[1] Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 457-461. [2] See p. 141.
[3] Dr. Flajshans, *Mistr Jan Hus*, p. 285.

Cardinal Brancaccio was deprived of the direction of the Bohemian affairs that had recently been entrusted to him. His successor, Cardinal Peter of St. Angelo, acted entirely according to the wishes of the Bohemian enemies of church-reform. The representatives of Hus at the papal court were declared to be heretics; some were imprisoned, while others succeeded in escaping to Prague. The cause of Hus at the papal courts was definitively lost and a decisive condemnatory judgment against him was being prepared. Momentous events, however, occurred in Prague before the judgment became known there.

The attempt to establish at Prague the sale of indulgences in a manner that was particularly repulsive to the citizens had produced a state of feverish excitement. The Germans and Romanist partisans declared that they would burn the Bethlehem chapel and murder all heretics. Among the friends of church-reform the more frivolous and unreflecting men were led astray and organised demonstrations that must have been very painful to the truly pious mind of Hus. Jerome was still in Prague, and Hus, perhaps better acquainted with his eloquence and learning than with his many faults, did not attempt to exercise sufficient restraint over him. It was, therefore, undoubtedly with the connivance of Jerome that one of King Venceslas's favourite courtiers, Lord Vok of Waldstein, organised a grotesque procession of which all sober-minded citizens disapproved. It is probable that King Venceslas, who was not at Prague on the day the procession took place, was utterly unaware of the intended folly of his courtier, but when after the death of Hus and the movement of universal fury which the news of it caused in Bohemia, the Council of Constance wished to attack the King of Bohemia, he was accused of complicity.[1] It is certain that on June 24

[1] This is stated in the acts of accusation against the King and Queen of Bohemia (Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 638-642). These acts contain many untruthful statements.

a very strange procession left the Mala Strana and paraded the streets. In an open carriage stood a young student in the attire of a prostitute.[1] He had round his neck and arms silver bells which rang continuously, and in front of him was placed a large sheet of paper to which were attached leaden seals, giving it the appearance of a papal bull. Behind the carriage followed a crowd of students led by Waldstein. As is always the case on such occasions in large towns, a vast and noisy crowd joined the procession. Many carried sticks and even swords. The procession wended its way through the streets of the old town and the market-place to the new town, where it stopped at the present Karlovo namesti (Charles's Square). Here the documents imitating papal bulls were placed under an improvised gallows and burnt amidst loud applause of the crowd. The foolish freak was obviously intended as a parody of the burning of Wycliffe's works by the archbishop. This recalling of the destruction of the writings of Wycliffe contributed to increase the public excitement. The opposition to the sale of indulgences increased, and those who had invested money in the sale naturally complained bitterly of their financial loss. Some of the theologians of the university, who may have been among the losers, accused Hus of having spread heretical statements derived from Wycliffe's works. These theologians wished to avoid all discussions on the subjects on which Hus generally spoke, such as the scandalous sale of indulgences, the immorality of the clergy, the universal prevalence of simony, and to engage him in another abstruse discussion of some obscure passages in Wycliffe's works. The always well-meaning king again endeavoured to mediate. He had for some time been residing at his castle of Zebrak, and he now summoned there Hus and the leaders of the Roman party at the university. At Zebrak Hus again

[1] We must reduce to this amount of truth the statement of the council that Waldstein had led a large procession through the streets of Prague *publicis meretricibus praeconibus*.

maintained that his teaching was in accordance with the true Catholic faith, and declared that he was ready to die for his opinions. On the ultramontane members of the university being asked if they also were prepared to face a similar fate, they at first declined, but finally stated that one of their number was prepared to do so. What followed does not appear very clearly from the contemporary accounts. An ordeal such as that which was held in the case of Savonarola may have been suggested. The meeting broke up without any result, and when Hus and the scholars opposed to him left the castle, the royal courtiers more kindly than wisely advised them "to reconcile themselves nicely." On Sunday, July 10, the theologians of the university were again invited to Zebrak by the king, and they for the third time presented to him articles concerning Wycliffe's doctrine. Among those present were representatives of the towns of Prague and several royal councillors and courtiers. We have no contemporary account of this assembly—no doubt because the writers believed that the events at Prague on the same day rendered it very unimportant.

The king had with regrettable leniency condoned Lord Vok of Waldstein's participation in the procession through the streets of Prague and had continued to consider him as a favourite. He had, however, in agreement with the town authorities of Prague, published a decree which threatened with the death penalty all who should take part in riots in the streets of the capital. Compared to the almost exaggerated leniency that had hitherto been the rule, this decree was certainly very severe. On Sunday, July 10, the vendors of indulgences who had lately suffered considerable losses, encouraged by the royal decree, when preaching in several churches, strongly advised their congregations to add to the fund which Pope John was raising for his Neapolitan campaign. They were, of course, not scrupulous in their enumeration of the advantages which the faithful would thus obtain.

Public opinion was already so intensely excited and irritated by the traffic in indulgences that troubles broke out in several churches. In the cathedral of St. Vitus, the Tyn church, and that of St. Jacob part of the congregation protested against what it considered a glorification of simony. In each of these three churches a young man who was supposed to be the ringleader was arrested and brought to the town hall of the old city. Through the vicissitudes of municipal politics, into which I cannot enter here, the German, or, as we may call it, the ultramontane party, had at that moment the upper hand in the councils of the old town. The members of this party saw that the government of their city was slipping away from them, and they determined to intimidate the people by a vigorous action. Here again it may be interesting to read the words of a contemporary writer. After mentioning the imprisonment of the three youths, the chronicler writes:[1] "Here I could tell much of what happened the day before these men were beheaded. It was on a Monday (that they were beheaded) and the Sunday before they were arrested during the preaching. . . . But I must shorten my account. I was present on that Monday; it was about the third hour, and it was already rumoured that these three men had been imprisoned because of the indulgences; and the news reached Magister Hus. Then Magister Hus with many other masters and students went to the town hall begging the councillors that they would allow him (Hus) to appear before them, for that he wished to talk with them; and thus they allowed him with some other masters to appear before them. The other masters remained before the town hall with their students, of whom there might be about two thousand. Meanwhile, Master Hus spoke to the councillors, begging them to do no harm to the three because of the indulgences, and saying that he was himself the cause of the opposition to the indulgences.

[1] *Ancient Bohemian Chroniclers*, vol. iii. pp. 16-18. It is often very difficult to translate into English the rugged Bohemian original.

If therefore anything was to be done to them for this, let it be rather done to him, for he was the first cause of it. The councillors, after having conferred together answered him and the other masters who were with him, saying that nothing would be done to them (*i.e.*, the three young men); therefore should they with their following go home and all disperse to their dwelling-places. Then Master Hus, thinking that nothing would befall the young men, went with a cheerful mind with all his followers to the Bethlehem chapel; and after they had escorted him home, they retired each one to his dwelling-place. A large crowd had assembled on the market-place, waiting to see what would happen, and what would be the end of the matter; for in the morning the town-criers had been told to call on all rich and poor to assemble on the market-place. Now, however, the order was given that all should leave the market-place and return to their dwelling-places. And when almost all the people had dispersed, the councillors ordered the judge and the excutioners to lead them (the young men) aside and behead them. And with them came many soldiers in mail from the town hall—for at that moment all the councillors were Germans, the armed men also were Germans, and among the others present were many German citizens—and when they had securely surrounded them, they ordered them to be beheaded, to the great displeasure of the mailed soldiers. They did not lead them to the place of execution, but to a spot in front of the house of John Celny;[1] there they beheaded them. And immediately a pious woman threw three linen cloths over the bodies to cover them. Then Master John of Jicin, with a large crowd of magisters, bachelors, students and common people assembled, but unarmed and peacefully. They took up the bodies and carried them to the Bethlehem chapel without asking permission of the magistrates nor telling them where they were taking the

[1] At the corner of the present Zelezna ulice (Iron Street) at the northern extremity of the market-place.

bodies. And the master (John of Jicin) with a loud voice intoned the anthem, *Isti Sunt Sancti*,[1] which is sung of the holy martyrs, and all joining with loud voices in the singing they bravely and joyfully carried the bodies to Bethlehem, while all the mailed soldiers and councillors looked on. Many students also, common people, lords and ladies, followed the bodies with much crying and lament, but with great piety, and while accompanying them to their graves they heartily pitied the young men, saying they had not deserved to die."

Hus acted with great moderation during these events. His innate belief in the goodness of human nature, which had led him to hope that even a man such as Pope John XXIII. would do him justice were he but informed of the noble motives by which the Bohemian reformer was inspired, had also led him to believe the word of the German councillors of the old town of Prague. He continued to maintain this attitude of moderation even after the judicial murder of the three young men. It is difficult to describe otherwise the deed of the magistrates of Prague. During the brawls on July 10, violence had been used on both sides. The three young men were only accused of having noisily interrupted sermons; on the other hand, when in the church of St. Jacob, part of the congregation had protested against the sale of indulgences, choir-boys and young monks had rushed into the church from the adjoining monastery and had driven some of the faithful into the common-room, where they were cruelly flogged. On Sunday, July 17, Hus preached as usual at Bethlehem, but made no allusion to the events of the past week. His somewhat ignoble adversaries, the rich parish priests of Prague, declared that he had been intimidated by the immediate severe punishment that had been inflicted on the three young men. The motives of Hus were very different. He knew that a large

[1] These words belong to the first antiphone of the second vesper in the *Commune plurium martyrum* of the Roman breviary (Dr. Lechler).

number of soldiers had been gathered together in the town, and though he had always cherished loyal feelings toward Venceslas, he was too well acquainted with him not to know to what sudden movements of fury he was subject. An order of the king could, on the slightest provocation on the part of the citizens, cause a terribly murderous struggle in the streets, the responsibility for which Hus could not, and would not assume. One word of Hus from the Bethlehem pulpit would have brought on such a desperate struggle, particularly as many Germans and Romanists were still in the city. Through Hus's silence such a catastrophe was averted. The Praguers also, following the example of their leader, behaved on this occasion with studious moderation. They indeed declared themselves ready to accept death as the three young men had done, but no attack was made on the German soldiery. We meet with this moderation on the part of the citizens of Prague generally during the earlier part of the Hussite struggle. If after the ruthless and treacherous execution of their revered leader they became revengeful and cruel, those only are entitled to blame them who practise truly the precept: "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

Thanks mainly to the energy of the notorious Michael de causis the proceedings at the papal courts had meanwhile come to an end. In August, 1412, a papal bull, published under the authority of Hus's new judge, Cardinal Peter of St. Angelo, reached Prague. It proclaimed the aggravation (*aggravatio*) of the sentence of excommunication which Cardinal Colonna had previously pronounced against Hus. The ban was to be proclaimed publicly, and all the faithful were forbidden to give him food or drink or to speak to him; then followed all the habitual clauses of a mediæval bull of excommunication. Hus's reply was a step for which he has been frequently blamed, particularly perhaps by those who did not bear sufficiently in mind the spirit of the times in which Hus

lived. He appealed [1] from the sentence of the Roman pontiff to Jesus Christ, the supreme judge. In an age when positive and undisputed belief in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity was universal, the direct intervention of Divinity in the affairs of mankind met with no disbelief. It will be remembered—to quote but one example—that the citizens of Florence at one time placed their city under the direct temporal government of Jesus Christ. The arguments employed by Hus in his appeal were simple. He stated that it was not from obstinacy that he had refused to go to the papal court, that his first representatives there had been imprisoned, and that the other ones had been refused audience and accused of heresy without being allowed to defend themselves. The enemies of Hus do not appear to have considered their victory over Hus at the papal courts as sufficiently complete. Again, through the influence of Michael de causis, a second bull appeared which commanded all the faithful to seize Hus by force and deliver him over to the Archbishop of Prague or the Bishop of Litomysl, who were to condemn him and have him burnt. The bull also decreed that the Bethlehem chapel, "a nest of heretics," should be destroyed and levelled to the ground. The indefatigable Michael also suggested that King Venceslas and his most prominent councillors and courtiers should be excommunicated. Pope John XXIII., however, declined to accede to this proposal. The *diavolo cardinale* was ready to proceed to any lengths against a pious and powerless priest, but he could not afford to quarrel with King Venceslas. The partisans of Gregory XII. were at that moment gaining ground, and the support of the King of Bohemia might become of great importance to the pope. These measures directed against Hus were followed by measures against the city of Prague. The interdict was again proclaimed, and it was now carried out thoroughly with all the

[1] Appelatio M. Joannis Hus a sententiis pontificis Romani ad Jesum Christum supremum judicem (printed by Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 464-466).

accompanying horrors that terrified the mediæval mind. All masses and sermons, all religious functions, even burial with the Christian rites were prohibited. The sacrament of extreme unction was not administered to the dying; none could confess, or receive communion. A troop of German fanatics attacked the Bethlehem chapel, while Hus was preaching there, but the determined though pacific attitude of the congregation intimidated them and they retired. Somewhat later—on October 1—Romanist citizens, led by the parish priest, Bernard Chotek, again attacked the chapel, but were repulsed by the friends and adherents of Hus, who were keeping watch.

The merciless execution of the interdict at Prague greatly troubled the mind of Hus, whose conduct was always guided by his conscience. He was in doubt whether he should leave the city or remain there. He has himself described his hesitation in a very striking manner in several of his books. "To me also," he writes, "it happened that some advised me to preach when there was an outcry against the brethren (of the Bethlehem chapel), when they were outlawed and their religious services were stopped; others again advised me not to preach. But I understood that both advised me with a good intention, and I was not certain as to which counsel would agree with God's will." Closely connected with the question whether his duty permitted Hus to continue preaching was the question whether he should stay in Prague or leave that city—as he eventually did. This decision is next to his resolution to proceed to the Council of Constance, the most momentous one in his life. It is interesting to study the motives of his decision rather in his own writings than in the comments of others. We find in the works of Hus an important passage [1] that deals with this question. Hus here, as so frequently, refers to the writings of St. Augustine, one of the fathers of the church to whom he had devoted much study. Hus writes: "Note that

[1] *Postilla*, xxv. p. 165 of Dr. Flajshans's edition. I have somewhat abridged Hus's statements.

St. Augustine asks this question: As the apostles were good shepherds and not hirelings,[1] why did they fly when it was attempted to kill them? But they acted according to the word of Christ, who said: When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another.[2] And Bishop Honoratus put the same question, when writing to St. Augustine and asking him what he should do when men were attempting his destruction. 'Behold,' he said, 'the gospel of Christ: when they persecute you in this city flee ye into another. And Christ also said: "He that is an hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep and fleeth." How then shall I act that I may fulfil this word of Christ, and yet not fly like a hireling? And in answer to this question St. Augustine wrote for him a whole book in which he examines the whole question very lengthily, and in conclusion he establishes this rule: Either the danger is one that threatens equally the lives of all, priests and laymen, or it does not threaten all. If the danger is common to all, then if all can escape to a safe spot, let them escape. But if it is not the life of all that is threatened, but either only that of all the priests or that of all the laymen: if only the laymen are in danger the priests need not fly, and the laymen can seek safety, for they are not shepherds. But if the lives of all priests are menaced, then may they not all fly, for they then would be hirelings, leaving their people without spiritual aid, that is without God's word and without baptism. . . . But if only one priest is in danger and the people can without him obtain spiritual aid, then that person may fly for future benefit, as the apostle Paul fled from Damascus; thus also St. Athanasius fled when the emperor wished to kill him; and after he had fled he later rendered great service to the holy church against the heretics; for he made that profession of faith which we usually sing or recite at the first hour, and which begins with the words: "Whosoever will be saved." But if the people

[1] St. John x. 11-12. [2] St. Matthew x. 23.

should by the flight of a priest be deprived of the word of God and of baptism, then he must not fly; for if such a man fled from his flock, leaving it to the devil, he would be as a hireling, who loves his body more than the salvation of his fellow-creatures.' Thus did St. Augustine answer this question to this Honoratus. And I relying on the love of God and the advice of many whose heels I am not worthy to kiss and on this speech of St. Augustine, seeing that the people had sufficiently of God's word and spiritual aid, fled when they attempted to murder me. Then I returned and again preached, and then when a consultation concerning an agreement was held by wish of the king and with the consent of the people, I again fled. Then when the consultation did nothing to free the word of God (to allow the freedom of preaching) I again preached and they always stopped the (religious) services (because of the interdict), and this diabolical stopping caused great injury to the people as they (the priests) would neither christen nor bury the dead; and dreading this great disaster among the people I again fled. And I know not whether I did well or evilly like a hireling nor whether these reasons will help me (to prove) that I was not a hireling."

This passage giving an interesting insight into the mind of Hus proves how earnestly and piously he weighed all arguments both in favour of his leaving Prague and of his remaining in that city. As already mentioned, Hus finally decided in favour of the former alternative. He determined to leave Prague for a short time. King Venceslas still hoped against hope that an agreement between the contending parties could be concluded, and he thought that the absence from Prague of Hus, who had incurred the deadly hatred of the rich parish priests, would facilitate a settlement. He therefore begged Hus to leave Prague for a short time, and the pious Queen Sophia, who had always continued to attend Hus's sermons in the Bethlehem chapel, probably used her influence for the same purpose. Hus was also moved by the sufferings of the

people of Prague in consequence of the interdict which, now carried out with relentless severity, deprived them of all spiritual consolations. He therefore left Prague, probably in October 1412.[1]

The departure of Hus from Prague naturally caused great rejoicing among his enemies, who declared that he had been expelled from the city. The fanatical monk Stephen of Dolein in particular expressed great joy that " he who in spite of the prohibition had not ceased to preach and would not leave Prague, had now been driven away by the just judgment of God."[2]

The period in the life of Hus with which this and the fourth chapter deal, begins with his formal rupture with the clergy and ends with his departure from Prague. The writings of this time, which Dr. Flajshans, whose services for the bibliography of Hus cannot be sufficiently praised, calls the polemical period, are not as valuable as those of the first period, to which at least one work of the highest value, the *Super IV. Sententiarum*, belongs. Still less can this period be compared to the following one, to which belong two of Hus's greatest Bohemian works, as well as his hitherto best known Latin book, the treatise *De Ecclesia*. With the exception of a few Bohemian sermons, all the writings belonging to this period are Latin. They are, as already mentioned, mainly of a polemical character. Of these polemical writings the treatise

[1] The date of Hus's departure from Prague as well as those of his subsequent short visits to the city has caused much controversy among the modern historians of Bohemia—Palacky, Tomek, Dr. Loserth, have all suggested different dates. More recently Dr. Novak has also written on this subject, which is also thoroughly discussed by Dr. Vaclav Novotny, in a lengthy treatise published in the *Vestnik kr. ceské spolecnosti nauk* (Journal of the Bohemian Society of Science) for 1898. The date of Hus's departure given here is in accordance with Dr. Novotny.

[2] Dolein writes, addressing Hus: " Vides, qui pro tempore a praedicatione et tua rebellione ordinarie prohibitus in loco illo cessare noluisti, jam justo Dei judicio inde cum confusione per inobedientiam ejectus, jam vagus et latitans, velis, nolis, silentio comprimeris et ori tuo magnalia eructanti digitum superponis." (Stephanus Dolanensis Antihussus, *Pez Thesaurus Anecdotorum*, T. iv. par. 2, p. 373.)

*Contra Anglicum Joan Stokes* is interesting. It refers to the conflict between Hus and the English ecclesiastic, John Stokes, which took place at Prague and which has already been mentioned. Hus has in this treatise reproduced the contents of the speech against Stokes which he delivered at the university. Stokes had stated that whoever read the works of Wycliffe or studied them would in the course of time become a heretic, however good his disposition might be, and however firmly his faith might be grounded. The treatise is valuable as it indicates Hus's attitude with regard to Wycliffe, which was by no means one of blind and unreasoning admiration, as has been frequently affirmed. Hus declines to give a positive answer to the question whether Wycliffe was a heretic or not, but in view of the obscurity of the question he thinks it more charitable to adopt the more favourable view and to hope that Wycliffe obtained salvation.[1]

Perhaps of yet greater interest is another polemical treatise entitled *Contra occultum adversarium.* Though Hus does not give the name of his adversary, the person referred to is known to have been the Bohemian priest Marik or Mauritius de Praga, surnamed Rvacka. Marik has already been mentioned as having been employed by King Venceslas in negotiations for the purpose of terminating the schism.[2] He was a determined opponent of church-reform and secretly attended Hus's sermons, taking notes there concerning those points in which he believed that Hus's words were contrary to the teaching of the Church of Rome. Marik affixed to the pulpit of the Bethlehem chapel a written statement—given in full in Hus's treatise—in which he declared that Hus had by his last sermon attacked the law of God and the authority of the clergy. The

[1] "Ego autem non credo nec concedo quod Magister Joan Wicleff sit haereticus, sed nec nego; sed spero quod non est haereticus cum in occultis de proximo debeo meliorem partem eligere, unde spero quod Magister Joan Wicleff est de salvandis." (*Contra Anglicum Joan Stokes*, Nuremberg edition of Hus's Latin works, 1715, vol. i. p. 136.)

[2] See p. 99.

principal grievances of Marik were, firstly, that Hus had interpreted the action of Christ who had driven the traders from the temple as signifying that He had granted to a lay king the right of ruling over the clergy, and, secondly, that Hus had stated that Christ had lamented over the destruction of Jerusalem principally because it had been caused by the sins of the clergy. In his treatise Hus maintained his theses though defining them in a manner somewhat different from that of Marik. The treatise *Contra occultum adversarium* is very difficult reading and its importance is not immediately obvious. Basing as usual his arguments on Scripture, Hus here maintains the power which the secular authorities should exercise over the church in a manner similar to that of Wycliffe —and indeed of many earlier writers—as well as to that of the later reformers, of Luther in particular. The friends of Hus therefore strove, and strove successfully, to prevent this treatise from being brought to the knowledge of the Council of Constance. The ecclesiastics of whom that assembly was mainly composed would of course deeply resent the theories contained in the treatise as encroaching on their rights, while they would not obtain for Hus the support of Sigismund, whose desire to annihilate the Bohemian reformer was founded on political motives. Hus's language in this treatise is very outspoken. He declares that it is the duty of kings and lords of the secular arm to restrain the wickedness of the clergy and extirpate the heresy of simony.[1]

[1] "Dixi quod Salvator noster ejiciens vendentes et ementes de templo dedit exemplum Regibus et Saccularis brachic Dominis quod vindicando Dei injuriam debent primum Cleri malitiam compescere et praesertim Symoniacae haeresis negotia extirpere." (*Contra occultum adversarium*, edition of 1715, vol. i. p. 169.)

## CHAPTER VI

### HUS IN EXILE

COMPARED to the period of constant struggle, such as the years 1409 to 1412 had been to Hus, the time between October 1412, when he left Prague, and October 1414, when he started on his fateful journey to Constance, cannot be considered momentous. Still less can it be compared in interest to the period of Hus's residence in Constance, which comprises his imprisonment and sufferings there, and his death which has rendered him immortal. If these months during which Hus was mostly absent from Prague do not require as detailed an account as other periods of his life, most of his most prominent works were written at this time and will require careful notice.

It is not easy to ascertain with certainty where Hus wended his way when he left Prague. As was the case a century later when Luther sought refuge in the Wartburg, Hus and his friends thought it advisable that his dwelling-place should remain for a time unknown. It appears most probable that Hus went first to Southern Bohemia, and a very ancient tradition states that he visited Husinec, his birthplace, and preached there. In December Hus addressed to the citizens of Prague a letter in which he explained to them the reasons that induced him to leave Prague. He again referred to the passage from the Gospel of St. John (chapter x.), which has already been mentioned,[1] and defended his conduct by the example given by Jesus Christ.[2] A man so entirely guided by the dictates of his conscience as was Hus felt obliged to recur

[1] See p. 162.

[2] "Non igitur mirum est quod ego exemplo ejus (Christi) fugi, et quia quaeritant et colloquuntur sacerdotes similiterque alii, ubi sim ego." (*Pragensibus*, December 1412. Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 46-47.)

frequently to this question, and we find allusions to it in several of his works. It is certain that Hus at the beginning of his exile spent some time at the castle, or " tower " as it is called in Bohemian, of Kozi Hradek, the property of John the elder, Lord of Usti, one of the firmest upholders of the cause of church-reform.

Shortly after the departure of Hus from Prague, King Venceslas resumed his well-meant attempts to re-establish religious concord in Bohemia. His task was not an easy one. The opponents of church-reform, considering the departure of Hus from Prague as a signal victory, became more exigent and more intransigent in consequence of that event. They continued to maintain that Hus had been expelled from Prague—a totally untrue statement that was repeated by the mendacious Michael de causis at Constance. The Estates of Bohemia met at Prague in December. Hus from his place of exile addressed a petition to the assembly, in which he complained of the persecution which he had suffered on the part of the parish priests of Prague and begged that the freedom of preaching should be maintained in the city. Hus's words did not fail to make a considerable impression on the members of this assembly, composed mainly of Bohemian nobles, many of whom shared their sovereign's objection to the extreme power and wealth of the clergy. It is but just to add that some of these men supported the cause of church-reform from higher motives and afterwards offered up their lives for it on the battlefields of the Hussite wars. The Estates advised the king to call together a synod of the Bohemian clergy which was to mediate between the contending parties. Venceslas gladly assented. He was, during all these protracted negotiations, guided by the wish to settle as far as possible within the country the differences that had broken out among the Bohemian clergy. It was endeavoured to exclude as far as possible the intervention of Pope John XXIII. The latter on February 2, 1413, at a meeting of the Roman clergy at the

Lateran, which the pope considered to be a council, condemned as heretical all the writings of Wycliffe without exception.

The meeting of the Bohemian synod was, however, delayed by a new change in the person of the Archbishop of Prague. Archbishop Albik, a wealthy and well-intentioned man had, on the particular request of King Venceslas, consented to become Archbishop of Prague and had even, according to the evil custom then prevalent in Bohemia, paid a large sum for that honour. Albik soon tired of his new dignity and felt that it became ever more difficult to conform to the wishes both of King Venceslas and of Pope John, whose views were often directly contradictory. He therefore entered into an agreement with two other great dignitaries of the Bohemian Church, according to which they were on receipt of a considerable pecuniary remuneration to exchange their offices. Large presents were previously sent to Pope John XXIII., who on receipt of them gave his consent to the agreement. Albik resigned the archbishopric of Prague in favour of Conrad of Vechta, then Bishop of Olomouc (Olmütz). Conrad, a German of Westphalian origin, had been one of the favourites of King Venceslas. Later in life, when Archbishop of Prague, he joined the Hussite Church and became the object of great opprobrium on the part of ultramontane writers. Tomek, whose strictly impartial attitude contrasts favourably with that of most historians of this period, writes:[1] "Archbishop Conrad was neither better nor worse than the great majority of those who held the prominent ecclesiastical offices in Bohemia in his time. Like the others, he only wished to acquire large worldly possessions as rapidly as possible." A contemporary chronicler, writing of the accession of Conrad of Vechta, tells us:[2] "Conrad was an elderly and weak man. He pledged many of the towns and estates belonging to the archbishopric, and some are still in pawn. For himself, he

[1] *Story of the Town of Prague*, vol. iv. p. 140.
[2] *Ancient Bohemian Chroniclers*, vol. iii. p. 14.

kept only the Castle of Roudnice." Albik, however, though anxious to abandon the difficult task of ruling the archbishopric of Prague, had no intention of foregoing altogether the ecclesiastical dignities which had come to him late in life. A further agreement, concluded at the same time, stipulated that the new archbishop should cede his bishopric of Olomouc to Venceslas of Burenic, provost of the Vysehrad, who was to give over his previous dignity to Albik, who was also given the titular rank of Archbishop of Caesarea.

Even at a period when simony was universal in Bohemia, this chaffering for the highest ecclesiastical dignities in the land became the subject of general talk and caused much scandal and indignation.[1] It is in such occurrences in Bohemia itself, far more than in the influence of distant countries, that we must seek the origin of Hussitism as well as the enthusiasm which the ascetic teachings of Hus aroused in Bohemia. On the other hand, the more Hus spoke against the avarice and immorality of the Bohemian clergy, the greater became the hatred and the animosity of the unworthy priests. They considered it necessary to silence at any price so dangerous an enthusiast—and they eventually succeeded in doing so.

It was this ignoble traffic in ecclesiastical dignities which was the immediate motive of Hus's famous treatise, *O svatokupectvi* (On Simony), which will be mentioned presently. It was probably written at Prague, where Hus stayed secretly for a short time during the last weeks of the year 1412. He wished to confer there with his friends with regard to the attitude which the church-reformers should take up at the synod which was shortly to meet. On January 2, 1413, King Venceslas published a decree summoning the members of the synod to meet at Nemecky Brod (Deutsch Brod) on February 1. The reason why the meeting was not to take place at Prague appears to have been that Archbishop Albik, though

[1] A contemporary writer—quoted by Tomek—says: "Mirabile cambium fecerunt! Sed utinam illud cambium esset sine simonia maxima."

he had resigned his dignity, still resided in the archiepiscopal palace. Albik, however, removed from his former residence before February 1, and the synod took place at the palace of the archbishops. Two statements were immediately laid before the assembly. One, which emanated from the party that favoured the existent state of affairs—it would be invidious to call it the conservative party—stated that the present discord had been caused by some priests who had disobeyed their superiors, and by those who spread the heresies of Wycliffe. They therefore recommended that Wycliffe's heresies should be again denounced, and that the papal bull which decreed the destruction of the Bethlehem chapel should be carried out. They also demanded that Hus should be delivered up to the temporal authorities to receive condign punishment. An additional paper from the same source offered suggestions as to the steps to be taken to suppress all opposition to the Church of Rome, and also protested against Hus's visits to Prague, "be they manifest or secret." The church-reformers in their statement demanded that Hus should be allowed to appear before the synod in his own defence. If no one there was prepared to bring accusations against him, then those who had calumniated him should be called on to prove that, as they had previously stated, heresies were prevalent in Bohemia; should they be unable to do this, they were to be punished. Simultaneously the university also forwarded to the synod a document from the pen of the gifted Master Jacobellus which covered the same ground as the one mentioned before, but expressed more fully and more clearly the views of the Bohemian church-reformers. It began by stating the necessity of restoring peace in Bohemia and putting a stop to the disorders in the Bohemian Church. The king should therefore take determined measures to secure the re-establishment of peace and concord, to destroy the heresy of simony, adultery, fornication, concubinage, and the superfluity of worldly goods and temporal power among the clergy.

The priests would thus be able to discharge more freely their sacerdotal duties and live according to the rules of the gospel; the laity also would in consequence fulfil more worthily its duties according to the decrees of Scripture. All customs obviously contrary to Christ's law which had been introduced among the Christian people should be extirpated everywhere —from the king downward to the meanest layman. With regard to Hus, the statement demanded that he should be confronted with his adversaries. Should it, after this confrontation, appear to be impossible to obtain both spiritual unity and worldly advantage, let at least peace and concord according to Christ's law be maintained in Bohemia, and all be ordered to conform to it. Then would evil report and the accusation of heresy not harm the kingdom of Bohemia. If unfounded evil report did not harm the Son of God, neither would it harm the Bohemian kingdom. The puritanic note of this spirited declaration is very striking. We meet here with ideas such as that of the duty of rulers to suppress open sin that played a large part in the Hussite movement. The controversy continued, and both parties replied to the accusations raised against them by their opponents. The friends of church-reform denied again that Hus and his friends were guilty of heresy. They maintained that the real cause of the complaints against them was the fact that they had strongly denounced the vices prevalent among the Bohemian clergy. The party opposed to church-reform found a very energetic champion in John the iron, bishop of Litomysl, afterwards of Olomouc. He addressed to the new Archbishop Conrad a letter couched in very strong language, but which contained nothing that had not been previously stated. The bishop made no allusion to church-reform, but maintained that the pope alone could and should decide on all contentious questions of doctrine, and insisted on the blind obedience to their hierarchical superiors which was the duty of all priests. Hus was denounced in violent terms as one

who shed the venom of his wickedness, heeding not the papal interdict, who falsely invoked in his favour decisions of the church that had never been published, that he might not be hindered by the teaching of the church which did not admit the "snarling of foxes and howling of wolves" which Hus mendaciously declared to be evangelical voices.[1] As was inevitable under the circumstances, the synod soon separated without having arrived at any conclusion. Hus had again left Prague, probably at the time when the sittings of the synod began. He appears again to have been guided by the advice of the king, who well knew that his renewed preaching at the Bethlehem chapel had greatly irritated those who wished to suppress at any price every discussion on the all-important question of the prevalence of simony.

King Venceslas was naturally greatly disappointed at the complete failure of the synod in which he had placed great hopes. He rightly attributed this failure mainly to the attitude of the opponents of Hus, and, always an enemy of the rich and overbearing higher clergy of Bohemia, he now became even more determined in his hostility to these men. He did not, however, even now despair of reconciling the contending parties. By his wish a large number of prominent ecclesiastics in April 1414 met for another conference at the house of Magister Kristan of Prachatice, parish priest of St. Michael, who was at that time also rector of the university. Kristan was a thorough adherent of Hus, and the choice of the meeting-place proves that the king still favoured the party of church-reform. As royal commissioners Archbishop Albik and Zdenek of Laboun, Provost of All Saints, were present. Four masters of theology, Peter and Stanislas of Znoymo, Stephen Palec, and John Elias, represented the theological faculty, in which the opponents of church-reform still had the upper

[1] All the documents concerning the synod referred to above are published by Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 472-504. It has here only been possible to note the most important points.

hand. The other representatives of the university were, besides Kristan the rector, Magister Jacobellus, Simon of Tisnov, and John of Jesenice, one of Hus's intimate friends, who seems to have acted as his representative at the conference. The conference ended almost as soon as it began. Acting by royal authority Zdenek of Laboun asked the assembly whether they would consider themselves bound by the decisions of the Roman Church in all matters of faith. Palec and his friends said that they agreed to this, but added that they wished to state that the Roman Church was that of which Pope John XXIII. was the head, and his cardinals the members. John of Jesenice protested against this statement declaring that the Roman Church was that of which Christ was the head while the pope was his representative. He added that he and his friends would obey this church "as faithful and pious Christians." Laboun, who, like his master, wished above all things to re-establish concord in the country, declared that these definitions formed the base of an agreement and that their acceptation bound all present under penalty of fine and imprisonment to submit to whatever resolutions the conference might adopt. His hopes were not destined to be fulfilled. At the second meeting of the conference Stephen Palec raised various sophistical objections to the continuation of the proceedings.[1] The bad faith of Palec appears to have been so palpable that it caused the indignation of the royal commissioners, who spoke sharply to Palec, accusing him of rendering an agreement impossible, while the friends of church-reform had been willing to come to terms.[2] The conscience of Palec

[1] It has not appeared to me necessary to give a full account of these objections. They will be found in Dr. Flajshans, *Mistr Jan Hus*, p. 325, and Tomek, *History of the Town of Prague*, vol. iii. p. 538. We have also Palec's own letter to his colleagues of the theological faculty (Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 507-510).

[2] "Ipsi vero" (the royal commissioners) "commoti sunt et nos gravissime inclamaverunt, comminationes facientes quod infra sex dies adhuc, debet redundare in nostra capita, et quod volunt D. Regi et omnibus dicere quod pars adversa vult et voluit, quae nos optavimus consentire et omnia facere, et nos noluimus acceptare; et sic cum indignatione magna stomachati recesserunt." (Letter of Palec. Palacky, *Documenta*, p. 509.)

does not appear to have been very clear, for he and his colleagues did not assist again at the meetings of the conference, which therefore broke up. Palec and the other members of the theological faculty, declaring that they were afraid of the anger of King Venceslas, left Bohemia and retired to foreign countries, where they continued to stir up public opinion not only against Hus and his disciples, but also against the King and Queen of Bohemia and their court. Many of their falsehoods and fictions were circulated at Constance and have even found their way into books written centuries after these events. King Venceslas was not unnaturally indignant at the departure of Palec, which accentuated the failure of another attempt to re-establish concord in his kingdom. By a decree published in the month of April 1414 he pronounced the sentence of banishment against Palec and his companions and gave the order that other masters should in order of seniority obtain the offices that had become vacant.

Hus had on leaving Prague again retired to the castle of Kozi Hradek.[1] He seems now to have despaired of a reconciliation between the contending parties and to have spoken even more openly than before. Now, as ever, he dwelt little in his sermons on controversial matters of theology, but he exhorted the peasants who flocked to his preaching to lead honest, chaste, pious, and abstemious lives and to demand that the priests, who, according to the church, were superior to them in authority, should at least not be inferior to them in their private life. Hus preached not only in the immediate neighbourhood of Kozi Hradek, but also at more distant places such as Usti, Lhota, and at Cerveny Dvur, where, according to a very ancient tradition, he said mass in a barn. His sermons, preached of course in the national language, attracted great crowds and caused intense enthusiasm. The neighbourhood of Tabor henceforth became the centre of the

[1] According to some Bohemian writers the spot to which Hus first retired on leaving Prague is uncertain, and he only now proceeded to Kozi Hradek.

partisans of church-reform. Among the younger men who listened to Hus's preaching were many who afterwards as "warriors of God" formed part of the armies which under Zizka beat back the forces of the whole world that was in arms against Bohemia. From this period dates the immense popularity of Hus among the Bohemian people—a popularity that clings to his memory up to the present day. It would, however, be very untrue to history if we pictured Hus as a democratic or socialist agitator—and it is not only his enemies who have sometimes attempted to do this. Hus remained to his death a loyal subject of King Venceslas, and for his pious consort, Queen Sophia, he always retained a respectful admiration. He was always on terms of friendship with many of the Bohemian nobles, as is indeed proved by the fact that he sought refuge in their castles. As he wrote in his famed Bohemian letter of June 10, 1415—a letter to which I shall again refer—he wished "the nobles to rule justly, the burghers to conduct their business honestly, the artisans to work conscientiously, the servants to obey faithfully their master and mistress." The unspeakably evil life, the avarice, and the simony of the Bohemian clergy strongly excited his indignation, and as a true Bohemian patriot he deeply resented the fact that, in consequence of former faulty regulations of the university, the rich benefices of his country were almost exclusively in the hands of German aliens. Frequent preaching did not, however, entirely absorb the activity of Hus at Kozi Hradek. He kept up a constant correspondence with his many friends at Prague and exhorted them to continue to worship at the Bethlehem chapel as long as it should not have been destroyed by the Germans; for it was frequently rumoured at this time that they had the intention of doing so. Some of Hus's most important works also were written at the castle of Kozi.

Neither the departure of Hus from Prague nor the exile of Palec and his adherents had re-established tranquillity in the

city. Lengthy and wordy warfare was carried on between the contending parties by means of numerous books and pamphlets. Some writings of Hus which deal with these polemics will be mentioned presently when referring to his works of this period. The population of Prague took an increasing interest in the controversy. Bohemia has, except during the not infrequent periods when the ruling powers have forbidden all discussions on matters of religion, been one of those countries where, as in England and Scotland, theological controversies have greatly interested the large masses of the people. Nicknames were soon given to the adherents of the contending parties, and while the upholders of church-reform were called "Wycleffites," its opponents became known as "the Mohamedans." The latter strange byname is said to have been given to them because of the violence with which they enforced their doctrines.[1] It may also have conveyed an ironical allusion to the morals of the rich parish priests of Prague, who were Hus's bitterest enemies.

Foreign countries, in which—with the exception of England—Hus's teaching had not hitherto attracted much attention, now began to feel a certain interest in the Bohemian movement in favour of church-reform. The first statements concerning the Bohemian movement came from France, a country that, mainly through dynastic links, had for some time been closely connected with Bohemia. A man whose opinion carried the greatest weight in France wrote denouncing severely the endeavours of Hus and his friends. This man was the famed divine, John Gerson, then chancellor of the University of Paris. Since Dr. Schwab[2] has proved that Gerson was not the author of the treatise *De modis uniendi et reformandi Ecclesiam*[3] long attributed to him, and on the

[1] This is the explanation given by Magister Jacobellus in a treatise printed by Von der Hardt, *Magnum Oecomenicum consilium Conlantiense*, iii. 648. Jacobellus writes: "Hanc enim legem, ut legitur in chronicis Machmet docuit suos, ut scilicet persequerentur et occiderent, non Christus."

[2] Dr. Schwab, *Johannes Gerson*.

[3] Printed by Von der Hardt, who attributed the authorship to Gerson.

strength of which he was believed to have been a tolerant and enlightened divine, Gerson's violent attack on the Bohemian church-reformers no longer causes surprise. In a letter sent from Paris on May 27, 1414, to the new Archbishop Conrad,[1] Gerson denounced the heretical views that were then being spread in Bohemia, and earnestly entreated the archbishop to extirpate at any price all doctrines and practices contrary to the Roman Church. Gerson laid great stress on the necessity of employing if necessary the secular arm. This, he continued, the archbishop should do at any price lest his sheep be infected with the poison of heresy; for St. Peter, who had confided them to him, had ordered him to feed them, not to allow them to be poisoned. Archbishop Conrad was to appeal to King Venceslas to advise, request, and, if necessary, order him to exterminate all heresies, if he wished to avoid the penalties that awaited all rulers who were lax in the persecution of heretics. Conrad's answer[2] was very short. He entirely joined in the reprobation of the "heresiarch" Wycliffe, and said that as far as it was his duty and circumstances permitted he would extirpate heresy, even at the risk of his soul or his body. Conrad, who had been a member of the royal court, knew how anxious the king was to re-establish peace among the Bohemian clergy, and how strongly he objected to the intervention of foreigners in what he considered the internal affairs of his country. Gerson was by no means deterred from further attempts to obtrude his unwelcome advice. He addressed another letter to the Archbishop of Prague,[3] in which he laid great stress on the fact that it was rather by fire and sword than by argument that the prevalent heresies should be extirpated.[4] Gerson sent with this letter a list of heretical statements which, as he said, had been made by Hus. We

[1] Printed by Palacky, *Documenta.*

[2] Palacky, *Documenta.* [3] *Ibid.*

[4] "Videtur autem parvitati meae quod contra hunc errorem exsurgere deberet omnis dominatio tam spiritualis quam temporalis *ad exterminationem magis igne et gladio quam curiosa ratiocinatione.*"

again find among them the wearisome falsehood that Hus had said that the sacraments were invalid when administered by an unworthy priest. These bitter letters, written some time before the meeting of the Council of Constance, render Gerson's intransigent attitude at that assembly less surprising. The voice of Gerson did not remain isolated. Thus Simon, Cardinal of Rheims, addressed a letter to Archbishop Conrad in which he also begged him to extirpate heresy in his diocese.[1] The evil fame of Bohemia as a country where heretics dwelt now began to spread, and was indeed scarcely extinct among the uneducated in Austria before the beginning of the nineteenth century. We find an early proof of this animosity when we read that Bohemian students were attacked as being "heretics" at the then newly-founded University of Vienna. A letter of Magister Michael Malenic, rector of the University of Prague, in which he complains to the authorities of the Vienna University of the ill-treatment of Bohemian scholars, has been preserved.[2]

The movements of Hus are at this period very uncertain, but there is little doubt that he paid another short visit to Prague in April 1414. He appears not to have stayed there long. The letters of Gerson, who as chancellor of the famed University of Paris and friend of the French royal family was greatly esteemed, made Hus's position in Prague even more difficult than it had been before, and they may also have impressed for a time King Venceslas. He was at heart always a friend of Hus, but greatly feared his treacherous younger brother Sigismund, through whose intrigues he had at the beginning of his reign twice been imprisoned by his own subjects. Utterly faithless and unscrupulous as was Sigismund, he was as ready to employ the accusation of heresy as any other for the purpose of injuring his brother. Hus, in whose character his deep gratitude for the often unstable support of his king must be noted as a somewhat touching

[1] Palacky, *Documenta.* [2] *Ibid.*

feature, decided again to leave Prague. He did not, however, return to Kozi Hradek, but accepted the invitation of Lord Henry Lefl of Lazan to make his temporary home at Krakovec, one of Lord Henry's many castles. Krakovec, near the small town of Rakonic in Western Bohemia, was, very conveniently for Hus, situated much nearer to the capital than Kozi Hradek. The career of Henry of Lazan is very interesting as being typical of that of many Bohemian nobles of his time. He had met Hus at the court of King Venceslas and had, like so many others, been fascinated by the manner and the enthusiasm of the young Bohemian priest. Lazan was one of those who, when Hus was illegally imprisoned at Constance, demanded most energetically that King Sigismund should release him. Yet he, some time after the execution of Hus, joined the forces of Sigismund, whom, after the death of King Venceslas, he considered his legitimate sovereign. He fell fighting against his country at the battle of the Vysehrad,[1] and before dying received communion in the two kinds according to the custom of his own Bohemian Church.[2] Perhaps among no class of men have these conflicts of contradictory duties been so frequent and so painful as among the nobles of Bohemia. At Krakovec, as at Kozi Hradek, Hus worked assiduously at the numerous and important books that belong to this period of his life. He also continued preaching to the people, who again flocked to his sermons, even from great distances. Hus was in constant touch with the court of King Venceslas, and it is probable that he was about this time informed of the plan of convoking a general council of the church, and of the possibility that he might be summoned to defend his opinions there. The innate goodness of Hus always led him to disbelieve in evil, unless confronted by its dire reality. He believed that the proceedings of the council would be somewhat similar to

[1] See Chapter XII.

[2] *Lawrence of Brezova*, p. 440 of Dr. Goll's edition. See also Dr. Flajshans, *Mistr Jan Hus*, p. 348.

those of the " disputations " in which he had so often taken part in Prague. He did not think that the council would proceed almost exactly on the lines of the trials instituted by the inquisition, that he would merely be summoned to recant all statements attributed to him by his enemies—whether he had ever made them or not—and that in case of his refusal he would be delivered over to the civic authorities to suffer death at the stake.

Meanwhile the negotiations between Venceslas's treacherous brother Sigismund and Pope John XXIII., which were to lead to the meeting of the council at Constance, had already begun. The *diavolo cardinale* was strongly opposed to a general council of the church, and particularly to one held outside the frontiers of Italy. He still had in that country a large military force by means of which he could, should a council meet in Italy, exercise over it the same dictatorial power which he had previously exercised at Pisa and Rome. On the other hand, the pope was obliged to consider the wishes of King Sigismund, for the two rival popes still had many adherents. Another difficulty that confronted the pope was that, even at that unscrupulous and unspeakably corrupt period, his evil life caused much scandal. At the recent " private council," if we may call it so, Baldassare Cossa was said to have stopped on their way to Rome and ordered back all prelates whom he believed to be hostile to his cause. Sigismund, whose help against his old enemy, the King of Naples, Cossa then desired, was intent on furthering the meeting of a general council of the church, which was to assemble under his control in an imperial free city. He rightly thought that nothing would contribute more to the restoration of the somewhat faded prestige of the empire. The fact that war was then about to break out between England and France also made the moment appear a favourable one for reviving the glories of the Holy Roman Empire. It is probable that to the humble priest John of Husinec Sigismund also assigned a

part in his far-reaching plans. Sigismund, always well informed on matters concerning Bohemia, knew that Venceslas had to a great extent regained his popularity in that country. His vices, in consequence of the influence of the pious Queen Sophia, were less prominent. He was decidedly popular with the townsmen and on good terms with a large part of the nobility. Sigismund knew that he could not now, acting as a bandit, seize and imprison his brother, as had been possible formerly. Sigismund had, as he mentioned at Constance, followed the career of Hus from its beginning. He did not doubt that the pious, simple-minded priest, whose actions were entirely governed by his conscience, would consider it his duty to appear at the council. Still less did he doubt that it would be possible to prevent Hus's return to his native country. This, at least, he was from the first determined to prevent. Sigismund believed—wrongly, as events proved,—that Hussitism, Hus once removed, would have a brief and precarious existence. The king knew that both Venceslas and Queen Sophia were already suspected of heresy. Should they be convicted of it, Sigismund could, as defender of the Roman faith, conquer Bohemia and free himself of his detested brother. The English students of the life of Hus have generally first met with Sigismund when he entered the cathedral of Constance on Christmas Day, 1414. His earlier record, his actions in Poland and Hungary, tainted as they are with perfidy and treachery of every description, are less known.[1]

The two men, who, not to the honour of humanity, were then the rulers of the Christian world, had some difficulty in agreeing as to the locality and the date of the council. When the papal envoys, Cardinals Antony of Challant and Francis Zabarella, who were accompanied by the Greek scholar Chrysolaras, visited Sigismund at Como in October 1413, they used

[1] Those who do not feel inclined to wade through the contemporary Polish and Hungarian chronicles, written in mediæval Latin, will find a good account of the early life of Sigismund in Aschbach's *Geschichte Kaiser Sigmunds*.

all their eloquence to persuade him to consent to the meeting of the council on Italian soil. Sigismund had, however, already decided that the council should meet at Constance, and not to lose time, he published a decree [1] dated October 31, 1413, in which he stated that the papal envoys had in the name of the Pope John XXIII. and with the approval of King Sigismund convoked a general council of the church that was to meet at Constance on November 1, 1414. Cossa was still reluctant, but at a meeting with Sigismund at Cremona at Christmas, 1413, he gave his definitive consent, and even promised to be present at the council. The meeting at Cremona has retained some celebrity because of the alleged intention of Gabrino Fondolo, tyrant of Cremona, to throw the spiritual and secular rulers of the world from the summit of a high tower to which he had conducted them.

Sigismund employed his great energy in endeavouring to induce all countries to send their representatives to the council. France was secretly ill disposed to the meeting of the council, and indeed to Sigismund who, abandoning the traditional policy of the House of Luxemburg, which was favourable to France, was then engaged in negotiations with England. The popular feeling was, however, at that time so strongly in favour of a council that, largely in consequence of the intercession of the University of Paris, the rulers of France decided to send representatives to Constance. England was favourable to the council. It was no doubt in consequence of the reaction against Wycliffe's teaching that the English representatives assumed what would now be called an ultramontane attitude at Constance. In every part of Europe the coming council was awaited with great anxiety. In view of the hopeless condition of the church ruled by men such as Cossa, it was hoped and believed that a council inspired by the Holy Ghost would re-establish union in the church and also—what appeared almost more important—check the unspeakable corruption of

[1] Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 515-518.

the priesthood. From the sources we possess it does not appear very clearly when the negotiations to induce Hus to attend the council began. As one who was excommunicated he was by canon law prohibited from attending a council. His frequent requests to appear before the recent synod at Prague had met with a refusal. It was, therefore, a very serious step on the part of Hus to proceed to Constance. Yet now, as at every moment when he believed that he was obeying God's command, he did not hesitate. The negotiations concerning Hus's journey to Constance were probably carried on at the castle of Krakovec. Peter of Mladenovic,[1] who is our foremost authority on the last months of the life of Hus, writes:[2] "After having come to an agreement with Pope John XXIII. for the purpose that a general council of the church should be held at Constance in Suabia, King Sigismund sent from Lombardy certain Bohemian noblemen, his councillors and friends, who were to persuade Magister John Hus to proceed to Constance that he might there purge both himself and the kingdom of Bohemia from the infamous accusation (*i.e.*, of heresy). They were to inform him that the king would grant him a safe-conduct which would enable him to go safely to Constance and to return safely to Bohemia." The much-discussed though really very clear question as to Hus's safe-conduct will have to be mentioned when referring to its violation by Sigismund. It should, however, here already be noted that Sigismund distinctly guaranteed Hus's safe return to Bohemia, whatever might be the decision of the council. Hus, Mladenovic continues, having received so great and so far-reaching promises, wrote to the king that he would proceed to Constance.

There were not wanting warning voices that advised Hus to reconsider his decision. Even one of Sigismund's envoys,

[1] For Mladenovic, see my *History of Bohemian Literature*, 2nd edition, p. 145.

[2] "Relatio de magistri Joannis Hus causa" (printed by Palacky, *Documenta*).

DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD AT CONSTANCE
DURING THE COUNCIL, 1414–1418

(From Reichental's Chronicle of the Council of Constance)

Nicholas Divoky of Jemniste—according to the Bohemian custom of abbreviating names he was generally known as Divucek—during the final negotiations that took place at Prague said to Hus: "Master, be sure that thou wilt be condemned." A member of the court of one of the most perfidious of rulers, Divucek well knew how easy it would be to Sigismund and to the council to apply to Hus the then generally accepted maxim that no faith should be kept with heretics. Hus at this time, probably to consult his friends, left Krakovec and again visited Prague for a short time. Here many of the prominent members of the university also entreated him to remain in Bohemia, where he would be safe under the protection of the nobles and the people. Many of the nobles—as one of them afterwards declared at the council—were not only willing, but able to defend Hus in their castles against all enemies. Of the sympathy of King Venceslas and the more open friendship of the queen, Hus felt sure. Yet he remained firm. He wrote several letters of farewell to friends, one of which has somewhat the form of a last will. There is, however, no justification in suggesting, as has been sometimes done, that Hus believed from the first that King Sigismund would break his word. His way lay through a wide expanse of German territory, and he knew, and even exaggerated, the hostility of the Germans to his person. It was also known that the former German members of the University of Prague were stirring up the people against Hus and the Bohemian kingdom. Hus being a man of truly apostolical poverty, it now became necessary to raise money to enable him to undertake so lengthy a journey. Many of the nobles and probably the king and queen contributed to the expenses. The university, which considered him its representative at the council, also supplied some financial aid. The "nobles presented him with a comfortable carriage, Lord Pflug of Rabstein gave him a handsome horse, and another noble also gave him a horse." [1]

[1] Dr. Flajshans, *Mistr Jan Hus*, p. 360.

On October 11, 1414, Hus left Prague accompanied by Lord Venceslas of Duba, Lord John of Chlum, whom King Sigismund had deputed to escort him, Peter of Mladenovic, private secretary to Lord John, and some attendants. A large crowd, including many magisters and other members of the university, accompanied him to the city gate. Many expressed fears that Hus would never return to his native country.

It has already been mentioned that the years 1412-1414 were the years of Hus's greatest literary activity. It will be well to notice first his Bohemian writings, which are more interesting as giving a clearer insight into the individuality of the writer. The recent researches of scholars have added so largely to the number of works rightly or wrongly attributed to Hus that I shall here confine myself to the mention of a few that are particularly valuable.[1] To the earliest part of this period, if not to a yet earlier date,[2] belong two treatises entitled *Zrcadlo Hrichuv* (the Mirror of Sin), an almost literal translation of the work entitled *Speculum Peccatoris* that has been attributed to St. Augustine, and a similar shorter work entitled *Mensi Zrcadlo* (the Smaller Mirror). To the year 1412 belong a series of expositions (*Vyklad*) dealing consecutively of the faith, the commandments, and the Lord's Prayer [3] and a short work entitled *Dcerka* (the Daughter) dedicated to one of the pious women who had taken up their abode near the Bethlehem chapel. An ancient and interesting tradition states that the book was dedicated to Anezka, the daughter of Thomas of Stitny. The teaching of Hus is here quite in accordance with that of the Roman Church. He here and

[1] The late Rev. A. H. Wratislaw in the chapter of his *John Hus* entitled "John Hus as a writer in his native language," refers to some of the Bohemian works of this period, though many would not now agree with his appreciation of their relative value. In my *History of Bohemian Literature* I refer (pp. 121-131) to the Bohemian works of Hus.

[2] See Dr. Flajshans, *Literarni cinnost Mistra Jana Husi* (Literary Activity of Master John Hus). It is not—according to Dr. Flajshans—certain that the *Smaller Mirror* is a work of Hus.

[3] My *History of Bohemian Literature* (2nd ed., pp. 123-127) contains translations from the *Vyklad*.

everywhere maintains the mediæval and indeed monkish theory of the superiority of maidenhood to the state of a matron.

Of greater interest than any of these writings is the short book entitled *O Svatokupectvi* (On Simony) written early in 1413; for it deals with the real cause of the Bohemian troubles of this period. The intense horror and detestation of the traffic in ecclesiastical titles and religious dignities—enhanced by the fact that both buyer and seller were generally Germans —was really the greatest factor in the religious upheaval of Bohemia. This has often been overlooked by those who have written on this period, though it is obvious enough to the reader of the contemporary Bohemian chronicles. In close connection with this point arose the question whether men who had by foul and unworthy means obtained ecclesiastical dignities could truly and validly administer the sacraments. Hus himself, as has already been stated, held the orthodox Roman opinion, but the subject gave rise to much discussion, which was by no means exclusively caused by the study of Wycliffe's works. The troubles of the schism had, of course, increased the difficulty of judging what bishops and priests could administer the sacraments validly. The papal secretary Collucio, in a letter addressed to Margrave Jodocus of Moravia, even stated that a schismatical or simoniacal pope could not ordain true bishops, and that those who worshipped the sacrament administered by a schismatical priest worshipped an idol.[1] It was for this reason that the Hussites in the "Articles of Prague" and elsewhere laid so great stress on the administration of the sacrament by "worthy priests."

[1] "Quis nescit ex vitiosa parte veros episcopos esse non posse? et per consequens veros deficere sacerdotes, veraque non habituros post aliquid temporis sacramenta, quos contigerit partem vitiosam esse secutos. . . . Illi ergo qui fuerint obedientes non vero pontifici quamvis simpliciter et conscientia non corrupta, si in aliquem inciderint ordinatum ab episcopis novis adorantes hostiam et calicem non Christi corpus et sanguinem, sed illam puram panis materiam atque vini cum aqua mixti velut quoddam idolum adorabunt." (Letter printed by Martene et Durand, *Thesaurus novus Anecdotorum*, vol. ii. pp. 160-161.)

It is with this then burning question that the treatise on simony[1] deals. It was stated by the adherents of all the contending popes that their opponents were heretics, and at that period, more than at any other, the accusation of heresy was scattered broadcast among the people. Hus desired to affirm that simony also is a form of heresy. Written at a time when Hus was incessantly accused of heresy by all those whom his denunciations of simony displeased, the book has, of course, an intensely personal note. In the first chapter Hus writes: "As simony is heresy, and as the evil denounce good men as heretics, I wish—as an admonition and confirmation for the good, and also for the correction of the evil—to define first of all what heresy is, that people may know whether those are heretics to whom they give that name, or whether they are themselves tainted by heresy." Hus then gives a definition of heresy derived almost literally from St. Augustine, and identical with the one contained in his *Super IV. Sententiarum.*[2] In the following chapter Hus defines the three sources from which heresy springs; they are apostacy, blasphemy, and simony. Apostacy is committed by those who forsake God's laws. Those are guilty of blasphemy who attempt to limit God's power, or speak irreverently of him, or attribute to human force things that God alone can do; among the latter are the priests, who say that they are creators of God, that they create the body of God whenever they wish, and that they send to hell whomever they will. Even such a short extract from this chapter conveys an idea of the unlimited power which a clergy holding such views necessarily acquired over an uneducated population, and of the terrible consequences which such a power wielded by immoral and unscrupulous men was likely to produce.

In the third chapter Hus writes of the origin and development of simony. Its beginnings, he tells us, date from the

[1] I have used Dr. Novotny's edition published in 1907.
[2] See Chapter III.

time of the Old Testament. It had " two fathers, one in the Old Testament called Gehazi, the other in the New Testament called Simon. The former took gifts for the healing of Naaman of leprosy,[1] the latter gave the apostles money,[2] wishing to obtain the power of conferring the Holy Ghost on men by laying their hands on them—but I will now more plainly describe the simonists, who are like those sons who, having had evil fathers before them, put on their boots." [3] " Know then," Hus continues, " that as those who follow Simon are called Simoniacs or Simonists, thus the followers of Gehazi are called Gehazites, those of Balaam Balaamites, of Jeroboam Jeroboamites, of Judas Judites." Hus, whose knowledge of Scripture was exceptionally extensive for his time, enlarges on these early simonists and then proceeds to more recent events. He writes: " Thus this year lying, lascivious, avaricious men, who by their evil deeds disowned Christ and derided the true path of Christ, have robbed the people by false indulgences, imagining strange speeches and absolutions, and granting remittance of all sins and punishments. And these men having the support of the masters (of the university) robbed the people all the more boldly, and lied as much as they could. But our dear Lord God gave the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to the good priests that they might preach against these liars, and to faithful laymen also (he gave it) that they should bravely risk their lives [4] and they offered up three lives (namely), Martin, John and Stasek [5] who, because they protested against false preaching, were beheaded in Prague, while others were struck, whipped and cudgelled in the church of Prague by the choir-boys, and others again cursed, insulted and imprisoned. Praise be given to Thee, dear Christ, that

[1] Kings ii. 5. [2] Acts viii.

[3] A colloquial expression in old Bohemian signifying the following an example (*i.e.* " walk in their footsteps ").

[4] In the original, " necks."

[5] The names of the three young men who were beheaded by order of the magistrates of the old town of Prague. See p. 157.

Thou hast given Thy faithful such grace that they professed Thy truth."

In the following chapters Hus deals with simony as it appears in the different ranks of the hierarchy. He first—in Chapter IV.—treats of the papacy, and begins by refuting the theory that it is impossible that a pope should commit a sin and therefore that he should be guilty of simony. Hus then denies that the pope is the most holy father, whom sin cannot touch; for only one is our most Holy Father, the Lord God whom sin cannot touch. Hus then proceeds to define in the customary scholastic fashion of his time the different manners in which a pope can commit simony. Always, however, mainly interested in the affairs of his own country and endeavouring to contribute to its spiritual welfare, he soon refers to the manner in which in Bohemia, as in other countries, papal nominees, often men of detestable reputation, were appointed to ecclesiastical dignities. "Is it not," he writes, "contrary to God's regulations that the pope should decree that his cooks, porters, equerries, footmen, should have first claim on the most important benefices even in lands of which they do not know the language?" This matter had great practical importance in Bohemia, where at that moment Roman nominees had even more than in other countries taken the places of native priests.[1] In Chapter V. Hus refers to bishops. "A worthy bishop," he writes, "must be of holy life, called by God through the will of the people, and without having bestowed gifts. When he is called, let him consider himself unworthy; and when he is compelled to accept, let him do so meekly for the praise of God, for the salvation of the people, and his own. For if he who accepts a bishopric is of holy life, full of learning and thus able to instruct the people, chosen by God through the people, consecrated and approved

[1] This matter has been very clearly stated in the *Cesky Historicky Casopis* (Bohemian Historical Yearbook) by Dr. Krofta in a series of articles to which I have already referred.

without gifts, then he truly enters into (possession of) his bishopric. But how nowadays shall such a one, who is worthy, be elected, and also confirmed by the pope? Sooner will the bridge of Prague break down than that any one shall in this holy manner obtain possession of the bishopric of Prague." This interesting passage proves that Hus had studied the records of the early church, when men were modestly reluctant to accept the office of bishop, and had almost to be forced to do so. Hus's ideal bishop also contrasts strangely with the bishops of his own time, who were warriors and lawyers rather than priests. In Chapter VI. Hus deals with the monks and specially with the mendicant friars. Of these, like most mediæval writers, he speaks unfavourably. After referring to St. Bernard, on one of whose works this chapter is, according to Dr. Novotny, partly founded, Hus writes: "But he who has not the books of St. Bernard, let him observe their (the friars') deeds, how with their meals and their servants, their fattening and dressing (their food), their dishes and goblets, their drinking and their spoons, they surpass the lords of the land. Driving in their carriages also and riding on their horses they surpass the lords of the land and the knights. Then in feasting and banqueting with their friends and others, who are compliant to them, they lose (spend) their alms very gaily. And how much do they spend on the keep of their dogs of various breeds? Who can write of their foreign wines of various fragrance? St. Bernard, a monk, describes to us how this one of their wines tastes of wormwood, that of rosemary, that of laurel, that of sage, that of elecampane, that of ginger, how sweet some are, and others how fragrant; and these they pour out, now from one distillery, now from another. And though thou, St. Bernard, wert not in Bohemia, I will tell thee that they (the friars) have also beer, both old and new, heavy and light. If unknown laymen visit them, they give them this light beer, thinking that they will believe that they (the friars) also drink it, and also that they (the visitors)

may drink less. But if they perceive a man of whom they think that he might wish to rest (to be buried) with them after death, or of whom they hope that he may give them something, then they draw for him a good pittance,[1] and one pittance follows another, and with them a pittance signifies to drink deeply and to feed well. Thus have these poor people renounced the bodily pleasures of this world that there are no men who have a more delightful dwelling-place for their bodies. Kings, lords, princes have not always food and drink so good, and always ready. The cellars of worldly men are sometimes empty, theirs never. Kings and lords may not find their food cooked and roasted, and may even lack bread, but for them deliciously white bread is always ready."

In the following two short chapters—VIII. and IX.—Hus discourses on simony among the lower clergy, and among the laity. Chapter IX., one of the most interesting, treats of those who indirectly abet simony, and shows how difficult it was at that time to avoid committing that sin. Among those here accused by Hus we find also the magisters of the university, and this affords to him the opportunity of introducing references to himself that, written with touching humility, appeal to all readers of his works. He writes: " Truly have I in the schools heard the magisters speak of humility, patience, poverty, courage, and other virtues, and very diligently and firmly did they speak, as if nothing could be better, and as if they fulfilled (possessed) all these virtues; but then in their deeds I found naught of these virtues, but a fulness of pride, avarice, impatience, and cowardice. And, as dear Christ states, they lay heavy burdens on the people, issuing their decrees, pressing forward to (obtain) the highest dignities of priesthood; and if men bow not before them like before gods, they wax angry; and if they are not placed at the highest

[1] The Bohemian word *pitancie* is identical with the English word pittance in the ancient monastical sense. Hus has here made a pun on the similarity of this word with the verb " piti " (to drink). It is impossible to render the pun in English.

place at table, they strangely mark their displeasure, and they dispute much for the foremost place in the schools." After a reference to the pride of the monk Marik, one of Hus's adversaries at Prague, Hus continues his reflections on the magisters, whom he compares to the Pharisees. He writes: "Our Saviour said that they (the magisters) love the first places at assemblies, they spread out the edges of their robes and cloaks and tabards and mantles. Alas! I also had these tabards, robes with wide sleeves, capes lined with white fur; for, alas! thus have they hedged in the rank of magister that you cannot attain it if you have not these garments. Therefore to guard men against pride did Our Saviour say to his disciples and the people: 'But be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ.'[1] Of these words St. Jerome has said that Christ thus wished to check evil desires, so that none might from pride claim to be called master. And truly I do not understand how a man can worthily be a master unless it be that he may have a better place to teach God's truth, and that he may more bravely speak the truth and defend it. But I have already found that simple poor priests, poor laymen, and women defend the truth more bravely than doctors of the Holy Writ, who from fear flee from the truth and dare not speak it. And I, myself, alas! was he who dared not sincerely and openly preach the truth. And why are we (magisters) thus? Because we are cowardly, fearing some of us to lose the praise of the world, and its favour, others (fearing to lose) our income. We are as the Jewish priests of whom St. John wrote: 'Among the chief rulers many believed in him, but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.'"[2]

The extreme conscientiousness and the extreme humility of Hus are apparent in this chapter. He deeply repented the natural, momentary pleasure which the son of the peasant of

[1] St. Matthew xxiii. v. 8. [2] St. John xii. 42-43.

Husinec felt when first arrayed in academic garb, and again felt doubtful whether he had done his duty when he left Prague for Kozi Hradek.

The last chapter of the treatise on simony endeavours to find a remedy for the terrible abuses which had been so powerfully described in the previous ones. Hus's suggestions are very bold, and they must have added greatly to the already large number of his enemies among the Bohemian clergy. Hus begins by expressing a somewhat utopian hope that Christianity would return to the institutions of the primitive church. "The best way" (to prevent simony), he writes, "would be that men be elected bishops and parish priests according to God's will. Thus did the apostles act, having no revelation as to whom they should receive as bishop in place of Judas. Referring to this, St. Jerome[1] says: 'As so great a man as Moses was not allowed to choose the priests of the people according to his own sagacity, or to appoint a substitute, who would there be among the people—who are often excited by rumours, vain-glory and material advantages—who also among the priests, who would consider himself worthy (to be a priest or bishop)? He only to whom, after he has implored God and prayed, God manifests this wish that he should become a priest.'" Direct election by God is therefore, according to Hus, the most perfect way by which the priests of the Lord could be appointed. The Bohemian brethren who considered themselves the true successors of Hus actually attempted to carry out this precept.[2] From these ideal heights Hus descends to more matter-of-fact suggestions. He considered the present system of the appointment of bishops and priests as a necessary evil, but thought that strict subjection of the clergy to the secular power would act as a beneficial

[1] According to Dr. Novotny these words are quoted literally from the *Decretum of Gratian*.

[2] The first priests of the brethren were chosen in this manner. It was believed that God's will could be ascertained by the drawing of lots. See my *History of Bohemian Literature* (2nd edition, pp. 208-211).

control, and check the sins and especially the simony prevalent among the clergy. "As every king," he writes, "has of God power over his kingdom that he may truly and justly rule his kingdom, and as the priests are in the kingdom, the king must guide them in the path of truth and justice; and he would not guide them in the path of truth and justice did he allow them, like negligent servants, to incur the wrath of the Highest of Kings; he would not thus fulfil the duties of his royal office."

I must reluctantly refrain from dwelling longer on the treatise *O Svatokupectvi*, to which I have perhaps already devoted too much space. It is, however, impossible, I think, to exaggerate the importance of this treatise. The positions of the contending parties, of the king and his court, of the opulent and simoniac clergy, and of the church-reformers, with whom was the great mass of the people, appear very clearly. We understand the true causes of the prolonged struggle in Prague which was delineated in the previous chapters. I may here mention that I entirely agree with a remark made some years ago by the late Rev. A. H. Wratislaw, who wrote: The treatise on simony would well bear translation into English as a whole.

That Hus was thoroughly aware of the importance of his book, of its boldness, and of the danger to which it might expose him, is proved by its closing words. "I have written these leaflets," he tells us, "knowing that I should obtain through them neither praise nor kindness nor bodily advantage either from avaricious priests nor from others who are laymen, for I demand no such things from them, desiring only God's reward and salvation. And if blame and torment befall me, I have placed it before my mind that it is better to suffer death for the truth than to obtain by flattery earthly reward. Thus also St. Paul said: 'If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.'[1] Understand then: if I

[1] Galatians i. 10.

had by flattery pleased the people, I should not have been a servant of God—therefore I avoid flattery that I may not imperil the souls of others and my own by flattery. Openly and simply have I set down my speech, that I may as far as is in my power crush and weed out simony. Deign Thou to be helpful to me in this cause, oh, merciful Saviour." I am not, I hope, prejudiced as being a countryman of Hus if I venture to state that, according to my opinion, few sublimer words have ever been written by the pen of man.

To the year 1413 belongs also another of Hus's most valuable Bohemian works. It may be stated generally that the treatise on Simony, the *Postilla* to which I shall now refer, and the Letters are the most precious of Hus's works written in his own language. It is in them that we find the true Hus, not in the scholastic and sometimes sophistical controversies with Stokes, Palec, and others. The *Postilla*, finished by Hus on October 28, 1413, was not actually the last even of his Bohemian works. It was, however, the last of his more extensive and striking writings and was therefore afterwards greatly venerated as his "testament" or "last will." A particular veneration for the Holy Scriptures was characteristic of Hus as of Matthew of Janov and all Bohemian church-reformers. The Bible was, however, very little known to the Bohemian people, and its study was by no means encouraged by the priests. The *Postilla* is a collection of sermons on the gospel for every Sunday and more important holy days of the year. Hus writes in his introduction: "I resolved for the glory of God, and for the salvation of the faithful Bohemians, who wish to know and to fulfil God's will, briefly to expound with God's help the gospel for all the Sundays of the year. I desire that those who read or listen be saved, that they may beware of sin, love God above all things, love one another, increase in virtue and pray to the Lord God for me, sinner." Hus then alludes to the ignorance of the Bible that was general among the Bohemians. "As the people," he writes, "gener-

ally have no gospel written in Bohemian, and it is difficult to understand an exposition without a foundation (previous knowledge), therefore will I always place the gospel first (at the beginning) of the exposition." The Bohemians thus became acquainted with at least a small part of the Holy Scriptures, which was read out to them in their own language.

Hus in this work, and indeed generally when he is not writing according to the scholastic method, shows a lightness of touch and a sometimes almost playful manner which render the *Postilla* very attractive. Since the Bohemians have obtained at least a certain amount of religious liberty, the book has been frequently published.[1] It is very difficult to give short extracts from a book such as the *Postilla*, but I think that a quotation from the exposition of the gospel for Palm Sunday [2] will give an idea of the interest and value of the book. After quoting the gospel of the day,[3] Hus writes: "Our gracious Saviour, approaching Jerusalem for our salvation, as to-day, showed great humility, great mercy; and entering the temple he showed humility, mercy, and justice. Humility because though being the Lord and King of the whole world he rode simply on an ass, to condemn worldly pride. Mercy he showed because, coming to Jerusalem and knowing what would befall its people both in spirit and in body, he cried bitterly till he sobbed, and unable to finish his speech said: 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if thou hadst known, even thou'—he did not through tears finish his speech, but cried.

"In the temple also he showed mercy when the blind and lame came up to him, and he healed them. Justice he showed when with a whip he drove the priests and merchants out of the temple, saying to them: 'It is written. My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.'" After again referring to the gospel of the day, Hus

[1] I have used the edition published by Dr. Flajshans, who has modernised the Bohemian of Hus.

[2] Pp. 121-127 of Dr. Flajshans's edition.

[3] St. Matthew xxi.

continues: "Behold this is what, word by word, the pope, the bishop, the parish priest must read to-day when they stand at the church gates in procession, that is, in the ordered march of the deacons and the rest of the people. And I know not how the pope could well read out this, if he can read, or a bishop; for there are many popes, archbishops, cardinals, bishops, canons, and parish priests who know not how to read in books. How also could (such a one) wish to read (the gospel) when everything (contained in it) would be against him? Christ on an ass and he on a large white stallion or horse, with a golden bit, the bit, girths and harness adorned with gold and precious stones; coloured tassels float from his hat down to the ground, and the caparison which covers his steed trails to the earth; before him they drive an ass or mule, which carries the body of Christ[1] and sometimes feeds on the grass in the fields; meanwhile they heed not Christ but kneel before the pope. They carry a baldachin over him, call him the most holy, throng round him begging for prebends and kissing his feet, if the mercenaries clad in armour, who with silver clubs drive away the poor, permit it. And he (the pope) sits on his war-horse smiling that he has so much praise. And our dear, tranquil, meek Redeemer rides onward on his mule weeping bitterly." Hus gives here a very striking sketch of the appearance and surroundings of a great warrior-priest of his time. If we remember that the reigning pope of the time was the *diavolo cardinale*, the contrast between the haughtiness of the pope and the meekness of Jesus Christ contained in this passage has a touch of very bitter though perhaps unintentional irony. Here, as ever, Hus expresses the craving for the return to the simplicity of the primitive church, which was the ideal of most noble minds of his time. The ideal may have been delusory and unattainable; it was certainly noble.

He who attempts to outline the life of Hus must allude to

[1] Opulent priests at this period were in the habit of having the sacrament carried before them in the manner described here.

all those of his works that are important, or characteristic of the writer. I cannot, therefore, omit the strange little book entitled, *Writings against the Priest-Kitchenmaster.* The work, written, as the title indicates, in a popular manner, met with great favour, and has been mentioned oftener than it deserves. Written in 1414, it was first printed in 1509, at an earlier period than almost any other work of Hus.[1] It certainly gives evidence of the occasional smallness of a great mind. It appears that Hus, during his exile, perhaps while a guest at the castle of one of the Bohemian nobles, met a " priest-kitchenmaster " (or steward of the kitchen), who is otherwise unknown to us. The man, who had given up his ecclesiastical rank to take a situation in a kitchen, affronted Hus, stating that " he was worse than any devil." Hus bore down on the unfortunate cook with all the weight of his scholastic skill. He advances fifteen arguments to prove that he was not worse than the devil, one of them being that the devil had sinned for 6005 years, while he (Hus) had not sinned for fifty years, not having as yet attained that age. Incidentally—and this is the only real interest of the book—Hus shows how largely the priests then occupied secular offices. " The priests," he writes, " now strive to obtain a hold on all worldly offices, where they smell money. We find priests as burgraves, priests at the register offices, priests as judges, priests as estate-agents, priests as cooks, priests as writers, and if the beadle's work were not so hard and so ill-paid, we would find priests as beadles also." Hus then somewhat uncharitably reminds his adversary of the proverb that there is no shorter walk than that from the kitchen to the beer-cellar.

Of the Latin writings of Hus that belong to this period, the most important is the treatise *De Ecclesia.* It was the principal cause or rather pretext of his condemnation at Constance. The book is an abridgment of the work of Wycliffe

[1] Printed in Erben's *Husi Sebrane spisy ceske* (Hus's selected Bohemian works), vol. iii. pp. 241-254.

that bears the same name, and its last chapters are also largely grounded on Wycliffe's treatise *De Potestate Papae.* It is not only certain that Hus differed from Wycliffe on several dogmatic subjects—being nearer to the teaching of the Roman Church than the English reformer was—but we have also no proof that he considered all the statements contained in the treatise *De Ecclesia* as absolute and indisputable truths. He never asserted this, and when questioned on this subject at the Council of Constance, declared that he would withdraw whatever might be contrary to the true faith, if valid evidence from Scripture were placed before him. No such discussion was allowed to take place. The members of the council interrupted Hus with loud threats and cries and silenced him. The condemnation of Hus was for the council a foregone conclusion, and as the treatise *De Ecclesia* contained sentences of Wycliffe that had already been declared heretical, the treatise was the safest weapon to bring about the death of Hus.

The keynote of the treatise *De Ecclesia* is the theory of predestination, but as will have to be noted when dealing with the trial of Hus, it is not certain that his views differed widely from those of the Roman Church at the point of development which they had then attained. The theory of predestination had undoubtedly by both Wycliffe and Hus been adopted from St. Augustine. In some cases the views expressed by St. Augustine do not differ widely from those contained in Hus's treatise *De Ecclesia.*[1] On the subject of predestination, as on almost all more important points, Hus was not allowed freely to express his views at Constance; but it is evident that he firmly believed that his views on this subject were not opposed to those of the Roman Church. He relied on his

[1] Compare the following passage from St. Augustine (*De praedestinatione*, 34): "Electi sunt ante mundi constitutionem ea praedestinatione in qua Deus sua future facta praescivit; electi sunt autem de mundo ea vocatione, qua Deus id quod praedestinavit, implevit. Quos enim praedestinavit ipsos et vocavit illa scilicet vocatione secundum propositum *non ergo alios, sed quos praedestinavit ipsos et vocavit* nec alios sed quos praedestinavit, vocavit justificavit ipsos et glorificavit, illo utique fine, qui non habet finem."

studies of the works of St. Augustine. A man of great humility and simplicity, he little thought that St. Augustine himself was little in favour with the churchmen of that day, who were statesmen, lawyers, warriors, anything but priests.[1]

The principal ideas contained in the treatise *De Ecclesia* may be briefly summarised thus: All men are divided into two classes, those who are—either conditionally or unconditionally—predestined (*predestinati*) to eternal bliss, and those who are foreknown (*presciti*) to damnation. The mass of the *predestinati* form the true Holy Catholic Church, but the church as at present constituted includes the *presciti* as well as the *predestinati*. Of the true church Christ is the only head. As man He is "head of the church within it" (*caput intrinsecum*), as God He is its "head without" (*caput extrinsecum*). Christ is the true Roman pontiff, the high priest, and the bishop of souls. The apostles did not call themselves "Holy Father" or "Head of the Church," but servant of God and servant of the church. A change came with the "donation of Constantine."[2] Thenceforth the pope considered himself as head (*capitaneus*) of the church and Christ's vicar upon earth. It is not, however, certain that the pope is Christ's successor in this world. Only then is he Christ's representative and the successor of St. Peter, and only then are the cardinals successors of the apostles, when they follow the examples of faith, modesty, and love which St. Peter and the apostles gave. Many popes and cardinals have not done this, and indeed many saintly men, who never were popes, were truer successors of the apostles than, for instance, the present pope (John XXIII.) St. Augustine did more for the welfare of the church than many popes, and studied its doc-

[1] This interesting subject into which I cannot enter is very clearly expounded by Dr. Harnack (*Dogmengeschichte*, iii. pp. 434-439). Dr. Harnack writes: "Die Geschichte der Kirchenlehre im Abendlande ist eine vielfach verdeckte Geschichte des Kampfes gegen Augustin."

[2] Hus of course believed in the authenticity of the "donatio" as did all mediæval writers before its exposure by Laurentius Valla.

trines more profoundly than any cardinal from the first to the last. If pope and cardinals give their attention to worldly affairs, if they scandalise the faithful by their ambition and avarice, then are they successors not of Christ, not of Peter. not of the apostles, but of Satan, of Antichrist, of Judas Iscariot. It is not certain that the pope is really the head of the church; he cannot even be sure that he is not a *prescitus*, and therefore no member of the true church at all. St. Peter erred even after he had been called by Christ. Pope Leo was a heretic and Pope Gregory (XII.) was but recently condemned by the Council of Pisa. It is a popular fallacy to imagine that a pope is necessary to rule the church. We must be thankful to God that He gave us His only son to rule over the church, and He would be able to direct it, even if there were no temporal pope, or if a woman occupied the papal throne.[1] As with the pope and the cardinals, so with the prelates and the clergy generally. There is a double clergy, that of Christ, and that of Antichrist. The former live according to the law of God, the latter seek only worldly advantage, Not every priest is a saint, but every saint is a priest. Faithful Christians are, therefore, great in the church of God, but worldly prelates are among its lowest members, and may indeed, should they be *presciti*, not be members of the church at all.

Of the other Latin works that belong to this period, in which—as already mentioned—Hus's literary activity was greatest, only a few can be mentioned. Foremost among them, mainly because of its great historical interest, is Hus's *Appeal from the Pope to Jesus Christ*,[2] to which I have already referred.[3] To the haughty and worldly clergy of the time it appeared both absurd and insolent, and every mention of

[1] An allusion to the fable of Pope Joan.

[2] "Appellatio M. Joannis Hus a sententiis pontificis Romani ad Jesum Christum supremum Judicem" (printed *Hus Opera*, 1715, vol. i. pp. 22-23, and more correctly Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 464-466).

[3] See p. 160.

the document was at Constance received with jeers and derision. With the articles derived from Wycliffe's works, which Hus was, rightly or wrongly, stated to have accepted in their entirety, and the ludicrously untrue and wicked statement that Hus had declared that he was one of the persons of the divinity, the appeal was the document by which the council was mostly influenced when it pronounced sentence on Hus. This is a striking proof of the unacknowledged and perhaps unconscious scepticism which prevailed among the rich prelates whose influence directed the deliberations at Constance. Hus's profound piety is evident in every line of his appeal. He confidently appeals to " the omnipotent God, the first and last refuge of the oppressed, the Lord who will preserve the truth in all eternity." Hus then quotes the examples of Christ himself, St. Chrysostomus, Bishops Andrew of Prague and Robert of Lincoln as precedents for his direct appeal to God.[1] He then begs all faithful in Christ, particularly the princes, barons, knights, citizens, and all other inhabitants of the Bohemian kingdom, to pity him, who had been unjustly struck down by excommunication on the instigation of his enemy, Michael de causis. Pope John XXIII. had decreed this punishment without even granting a hearing to Hus's representatives, a favour which should not even be refused to Jew, pagan, or heretic. Hus ends by again appealing to the " Lord Jesus Christ, the justest judge, who knows, protects, and rewards all men whose cause is just." Though one of Hus's shortest works, the *Appeal* is, because of its historical interest, one of the best known. We therefore possess very numerous manuscripts of the treatise, and it has been fre-

[1] " . . . ad Deum appello, committens sibi causam meam, salvatoris Jesu Christi sequens vestigia, sicut sanctus et magnus patriarcha Constantinopolitanus Joannes Chrysostomus a duplici episcoporum et clericorum concilio, et beati in spe episcopi, Andreas Pragensis et Robertus Linconiensis episcopus a papa ad supremum et justissimum judicem, qui nec timore concutitur, nec amore flectitur, nec munere curvatur, nec falsis decipitur testibus, injuriose oppressi humiliter et salubriter appellarunt."

quently printed and translated into Bohemian, German, English, and French.

The *Appellatio* dates from August 1412, and almost at the same time Hus first wrote a short treatise, which he afterwards submitted to the Council of Constance, and which in consequence has become known as his protest to the council.[1] Hus frequently refers in his other writings to this brief document, which is a short confession of faith. He repeatedly affirms in it that he is a faithful member of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head and bridegroom of the holy church which he redeemed, and that he never had maintained and never would maintain any doctrine that was contrary to the truth, and that he was ready to lay down his life for the law of Christ.

Incessantly attacked as Hus was by opponents who were largely influenced by personal and egotistical motives, he naturally became engaged in frequent polemics. This applies to this period also, though not so exclusively as to the previous one. Of the polemical works written between 1412 and 1414 I will only mention two. One of these is the treatise entitled *Replica Contra Prædicatorem Plznensem* (A Reply to the Preacher of Plzen). It is very interesting as showing what outrageous pretensions the Bohemian clergy raised at this period. They explain to a great extent the stern disapproval and dislike of priests shown by many genuinely pious Bohemians at this time. The friends of Hus informed him that a preacher at Plzen had in his sermons raised strange—to a modern mind they appear blasphemous—claims on behalf of the clergy. The priest had stated, among other things, that the worst priest was better than the best layman,[2] and that a priest when officiating was the father of God and the

[1] Printed in *Hus Opera*, 1715, vol. i. p. 13, and Palacky, *Documenta*, p. 267.

[2] Tertio praedicavit quod pessimus Sacerdos est melior optimo Laico." (*Hus Opera*, 1715, vol. i. p. 179.)

creator of God's body.[1] Hus then drew attention to a book, entitled *Stella Clericonum*, which was then widely read by the clergy. The book contained even more outrageous statements than those mentioned before. Thus the superiority of priests over the Virgin Mary was affirmed.[2] Hus indignantly repudiated these pretensions of the clergy, which he rightly stigmatised as being blasphemous. This little known polemical treatise to a great extent explains the strong opposition to the doctrine of transubstantiation which we find in the writings of many Bohemian church-reformers, though not in those of Hus. Though greatly disapproving of claims such as those mentioned above, Hus always accepted the doctrine of transubstantiation as taught by the Roman Church.

The only other polemical work of this period which I shall mention is Hus's *Answer to the Writings of Stanislas*. Stanislas of Znoymo had at the beginning of the Bohemian movement been a favourer of church-reform and a personal friend of Hus. He shared the latter's admiration of the writings of Wycliffe, and accepted the theories of the English church-reformer far more unconditionally than Hus ever did. Stanislas several times defended the famous articles of Wycliffe before the University of Prague. He afterwards entirely changed his views and became, with Palec and the infamous Michael de causis, one of Hus's bitterest enemies. It was, of course, the principal task of these enemies to maintain that Hus had expressed heretical opinions, and that they attacked him for this reason, not because he blamed the evil life of the Bohemian priests. Stanislas had written a book, known from its opening words as *Alma Venerabilis*. This book has not been preserved and we can only judge of its contents by Hus's refutation. It is certain that in his work Stanislas dealt largely

[1] "Articulus secundus ponit quod Sacerdos postquam officiat est pater Dei et creator corporis Dei." (*Hus Opera*, 1715, vol. i. p. 181.)

[2] "Unde assumpto mendacio arguunt (the priests) sic: Si virgo Maria est beata, vel digna quia semel Christum genuit, beatior vel dignior est quilibet sacerdos, qui eum saepe creavit, et potest creare quando vult." (*Ibid.* p. 182.)

with the power and authority of the pope, which he appears to have defined in a manner similar to that of the most extreme modern ultramontanes. His opinions were thus in direct opposition to those of Hus.[1] As Hus very openly stated, Stanislas was to a great extent influenced by fear. Hus did not omit to draw attention to the strange contrast between Stanislas's former exaggerated praise of Wycliffe and his present equally exaggerated denunciations of the English divine. Replying to Stanislas's panegyric of the papal power, Hus naturally, though perhaps hardly fairly, alluded to the infamous character of Pope John XXIII., who then held the dignity of pontiff. After denying that it could be proved from Scripture that God had given unlimited power to a pope chosen at an election influenced by the favour of man, fear, and cupidity, Hus challenges Stanislas to prove John XXIII.'s claim to the throne "by the sanctity of his life and of his deeds, not by his desire for the comforts and honours of the world, not by the fulminations of terrible censures to show his power, not by the plundering of the subject fold, not by extortion and simony; for Christ hath said: Ye shall know them by their fruits."[2] The book generally somewhat recalls the treatise *De Ecclesia*. We meet here again with the defence of the claim of the temporal power to control the papacy

[1] Stanislas—quoted by Hus—stated that the pope was the head of the church "in quo capite est fontalis et capitalis plenitudo ecclesiasticae potestatis supra terram propter quod illud caput omnes alias simul super terram dignitates officiarias, ecclesiasticas et seculares, Patriarchales, Episcopales, Sacerdotales, Clericales, Magistrales, Imperiales, Regales, Ducales, Marchionales, Comitales, Baronales, Militares, Consulares, etc., in dignitate transcendit innumerabiliter, in profunditate sicut fons, in altitudine sicut caput, in latitudine sicut alveus." Responsio ad Scripta Stanislai (*Hus Opera*, 1715, vol. i. p. 342).

[2] "Non sufficit doctori (Stanislas) humana electio, quae ex favore humano, Timore vel cupidine processit, imo claudicat doctoris positio, nisi ipsam stabilitat a posteriori scilicet ex vitae et operum sanctitate ipsius Joannis, non ex aspiratione ad seculi commodum vel honorem, nec ex fulminatione censurae terrificae ad ostendendam dominationem, quam Petrus sequendo Christum prohibet, nec ex tonsione gregis subjecti per temporalium extorsionem, nec ex fomento publicanatus vel Simoniae. . . . Cum dicat Christus, Dominus Joan, 10, *Operibus credite;* et Matth. 7, *A fructibus eorum cognoscitis eos.*" (*Ibid.* p. 342.)

and the church. They were the same views that had appeared so prominently in the writings of Marsiglio of Padua and of the other theologians of the court of Louis of Bavaria, as well as in those of Wycliffe. We find again in this controversial work of Hus allusions to the two great fables of the Middle Ages, the one papal, the other anti-papal. I refer to the "donation of Constantine" and the tale of the Popess Joan, whom Hus calls "Agnes." Hus here again affirms that Jesus Christ, not the pope, is the head of the Catholic Church. In this mass of argument founded on the writings of earlier theologians, we meet here and there with opinions very characteristic of Hus, who always wished to be a moralist rather than a theologian. Thus, when animadverting on the evil choice often made by popes when appointing bishops, he writes:[1] "Christ, the bridegroom of the church, would far better and more readily choose for the people of the Bohemian nation a bishop learned in its law, able to preach the gospel in Bohemian, one living soberly, chastely, piously, and justly."

[1] *Hus Opera*, 1715, vol. i. p. 348.

## CHAPTER VII

### HUS AT CONSTANCE

Hus and his companions, who had left Prague on October 11, 1414, were joined on their journey at Plzen (Pilsen) by Lord Henry of Chlum, surnamed Lacembok, who appears to have been sent by King Venceslas as a protector of Hus, and by John of Rejnstein, surnamed "Kardinal." John of Rejnstein, a parish priest of Prague and a great friend of Hus, had, with Lord John of Chlum, undertaken to represent at the council the University of Prague. Mainly through the influence of Gerson and Cardinal d'Ailly they obtained no hearing, and the University of Prague was, like King Venceslas, unrepresented at Constance. The Bohemians passed the frontier of their country at Bärnau and arrived at the free imperial city of Nuremberg on October 19. On their way through German territory they were everywhere well received by the people, who saw in Hus the champion of church-reform, which all thoughtful men and the worthier members of the clergy also desired. The difference of nationality proved no barrier, and it may here be mentioned that nothing can be less true than the ancient statement which accuses Hus of having been an enemy of the Germans generally. It is certain that Hus disliked the Germans in Bohemia who had taken possession of most of the ecclesiastical benefices and other important appointments in his country, while they—not only at the time of Hus—looked down on the Bohemians as intellectually their inferiors. Hus's views on this question have already been mentioned, and I shall again have to refer to them. The feelings of the Bohemians of this period were somewhat similar to those which the Italians of the earlier

part of the nineteenth century entertained towards the *tedeschi*, who were considered as intruders. When Italy became free the hatred of Germans gradually ceased.

Of Hus's stay at Nuremburg, Mladenovic, his faithful companion on his last journey, writes:[1] "When he (Hus) then arrived at Nuremberg with the lords, whom I have mentioned, after they had dined, some magister, I think he was one Albert, parish priest of St. Sebaldus, came to them saying that he wished to discourse with them in a friendly manner. After he (Hus) had consented, some other priests came, among whom was a doctor (of theology) and several members of the council of the town. They then discoursed with the master for four hours on various matters connected with him, and on what rumour had reported, and when they had conferred on each one of these matters, they said: 'For certain, master, this which we have heard is catholic (doctrine). We have for many years taught and held these doctrines and we now teach and believe them, and if there is nothing else against thee, thou wilt certainly leave the council and return from it with honour. And then they all parted in a friendly fashion." At Nuremburg Hus was informed that King Sigismund had now prepared the letter of safe-conduct for him, and it was suggested that he should proceed to Spires, where Sigismund then stayed, to receive the letter and place himself under the king's immediate protection. Hearing that many members of the council had already arrived at Constance, and that Pope John XXIII. was already on his way there, Hus decided to continue his journey directly to Constance. He begged his friend Lord Venceslas of Duba to proceed to the imperial court and receive the letter of safe-conduct for him. Hus has often been blamed for this decision, which certainly bears witness to his innate belief in the goodness of human nature, and perhaps to his want of worldly wisdom. Yet if we take the nature of Sigismund into account

[1] Palacky, *Documenta.*

and remember that he was acting in accordance with a preconceived plan, it is difficult to believe that the final result would have been different had Hus proceeded to Spires. From Nuremburg the Bohemians continued their journey through Southern Germany by Ansbach and Ulm to Biberach, then a free city, now an insignificant and decaying town in the kingdom of Würtemberg. Here, as everywhere, the Bohemians showed that fondness for theological discussions which was then characteristic of their nation and which only disappeared when, after the battle of the White Mountain, all religious liberty perished for centuries. When a discussion on religious matters began at Biberach, Lord John of Chlum took so prominent a part—while Hus spoke little—that the citizens believed him to be a doctor of theology. His companions henceforth gave Lord John the nickname, *doctoralis de Pibrach.* From Biberach the Bohemians proceeded by Ravensburg to Buchhorn, on the lake of Constance. They crossed the lake in a boat and arrived at the city of Constance on November 3, 1414. Hus was lodged in the house of "a good widow named Fida," as Mladenovic writes, which was situated in St. Paul's Street—now called Hus's Street—near the Schnetz gate. The house, which is probably little changed, is shown to visitors. A medallion with a bust of Hus and an inscription in Bohemian and German was placed on it some years ago. In his first letter[1] after his arrival at Constance Hus writes, on November 4: "We arrived at Constance on the Saturday after All Souls without any annoyance, after having passed through different cities and after having everywhere distributed our proclamation (stating that Hus was going to Constance freely to clear himself of the accusation of heresy), written both in Latin and in German. We live at Constance near the pope's dwelling-place, and have arrived

[1] Palacky, *Documenta.* When the contrary is not stated I have always quoted Hus's letters from Palacky's work, which contains far the most complete collection of documents referring to Hus.

without safe-conduct. The day after my arrival Michael de causis placed on the door of the church (cathedral) an information against me written in large letters and stating that he accuses John Hus, a man excommunicated, pertinacious, and suspected of heresy and other such things. But with God's help I will not heed this, knowing that God sent him against me that he (Michael) should curse me because of my sins, and also to try me (my strength) whether I could and would endure suffering.[1]

By this time Hus's enemies had begun to assemble at Constance. Friends, except his few Bohemian comrades, he could not expect to find there, and although he put trust in the faithless Sigismund, the fact that he undertook the journey proves how entirely he submitted himself to the behests of his conscience and to the decrees of providence. Some days before Hus, the famed pontiff John XXIII. had arrived at Constance. He left Bologna at the beginning of October and made his way to Constance through the Tirol. At Trent he had an important interview with Duke Frederick of Austria, then ruler of the Tirol. An unwritten alliance between the house of Habsburg and the papal see has, with brief intervals, existed since the time of Rudolph of Habsburg. The duke and the pope, therefore, soon came to an agreement. John XXIII. conferred on Frederick the title of gonfalonier of the holy church with an annual salary of 6000 ducats. Frederick, on the other hand, recognised the claims of John to the papacy, promised to escort him to Constance with an armed force, and to afford him a refuge in his dominions—which marched with those of the city of Constance—if he should not feel safe there. These negotiations begun at Trent were concluded at Meran. In agreeing to this alliance Frederick was guided not only by the hope of pecuniary advantage, but also by his bitter hatred

[1] The letter—written in Latin—ended with the words: "Datum in Constantia. Oretis Deum pro constantia in veritate."

of Sigismund, which sprang from a cause equally discreditable to both princes.[1]

From the Tirol the pope crossed by the Arlberg Pass into Vorarlberg. Richenthal, that very entertaining, though very mendacious chronicler of the council, thus describes the pope's journey:[2] "When the pope arrived at the summit of the Arlberg near where the monastery is, his carriage overturned and he lay in the snow under the carriage. Then his lords and courtiers came to him and said: 'Holy Father, hast thou not been injured!' He answered, 'I lie here in the name of the devil!' Then when they proceeded onward from the monastery and could look down on Bluditz (probably Bludenz) and the land, he said: *Sic capiuntur vulpes*, which means, 'Thus are foxes entrapped.'" The pope and his party then proceeded to Feldkirch and from there by Reinegg to Constance, where the pope was received with great solemnity.

It was not, however, Baldassare Cossa who was to prove Hus's most dangerous and bitterest enemy. These were found among his own countrymen. It is the fact that in all the most important moments the task of great Bohemians has been frustrated by the envy and malice of their own countrymen that renders the history of Bohemia one of the saddest in the annals of the world. Foremost among Hus's enemies was John the iron, Bishop of Litomysl. It is not probable that he was greatly interested in Wycliffe's profound but arid doctrines. Like most of Hus's Bohemian opponents, he had probably read none of the English reformer's works. But as a notorious simonist and a very opulent man, he saw the great danger which men of his class would necessarily incur, if the

[1] During the festivities that by Frederick's order took place at Innsbruck in honour of Sigismund, a young girl, the daughter of a notable citizen, was violated, and public opinion pointed to one of the two princes as having been guilty of the deed. Both Sigismund and Frederick affirmed their innocence, each maintaining that the other was the culprit. Mortal enmity arose between the two princes in consequence. The whole story is told by Eberhard Windeck, c. 32.

[2] Ulrich von Richenthal, *Chronik des Constanzer Concils*, ed. 1882, p. 25.

praise of poverty and the laudation of the simplicity of the primitive church were permitted. Though a very rich man —he had even attempted to outbid Albik when the latter obtained the archbishopric of Prague — John the iron did not think his own ample means sufficient to crush the detested Hus. He therefore applied to the higher ecclesiastical dignitaries of Bohemia and Moravia, to the parish priests of Prague, who had a great personal interest in the matter, and to several nobles who were opposed to church-reform, asking them for financial aid. By means of this subscription a very large sum of money was raised; the services of many informers were secured; Hus was surrounded by spies as soon as he arrived at Constance. Among the early arrivals at Constance also was Venceslas Tiem, Dean of Passau, whose trade in indulgences in Prague had caused the outbreak of the crisis. No doubt also with a desire for revenge several members of the new university of Leipzig attended the council, wishing to denounce Hus, through whose influence, as they believed, they had been unjustly driven from Prague. Michael de causis, as mentioned, had arrived at Constance before Hus. Stephen Palec, who was to take so prominent a part in the proceedings against Hus, now also arrived there. Mladenovic writes: "Stephen Palec arrived at Constance. He had travelled from Bohemia with Magister Stanislas of Znoymo, but the latter had been struck down by apoplexy at Jindrichuv Hradec (Neuhaus) and had died. Here (at Constance) Palec immediately associated with Michael de causis, the 'instigator,'[1] and an enemy of Hus. They wrote down some articles against Magister Hus which, they said, they had derived from the treatise *De Ecclesia*. Stephen, with the said Michael, ran hither and thither[2] among the principal cardinals, archbishops, bishops, and other prelates, and we saw him do

[1] Palacky adds as an explanation the Bohemian word *nabadac*. The French word *agent-provocateur* perhaps best conveys the meaning intended.

[2] "*cursitabat.*"

this almost daily. He there accused Magister Hus and instigated them at least to arrest him. Then he associated with the friars, showed them the articles already mentioned and others, and he especially stirred up against Hus the older and more learned men, showing them other accusations, of which I obtained a copy from one of them." Mladenovic then gives some personal details concerning Palec and Michael de causis. He states that the former had been a friend of Hus and that the latter—as has been already mentioned—had been obliged to fly from Bohemia because he had embezzled money confided to him for the working of gold-mines.

As soon as Hus had arrived at Constance two of his protectors and companions, Lord Henry of Chlum and Lord John of Duba, had visited Pope John XXIII., who lived in the palace of the bishop not far from the dwelling-place of Hus. They announced Hus's arrival to the pope, who assured them that he would allow no one to molest him and that he would be perfectly safe at Constance, even should he have killed his own brother. To the *diavolo cardinale* Hus probably appeared as a harmless enthusiast, and he may have considered it politic to befriend the Bohemian noblemen in view of his possibly being involved in a conflict with Sigismund. During the short period of freedom which was granted to Hus at Constance he led the life of a recluse, hardly ever leaving his dwelling. As had been his custom during his journey and also when living as an exile in Bohemia, he said mass daily in strictest privacy. It was only from his little window that he watched the gay life of the city of Constance, which for a time had become the intellectual and political, and, to a certain extent, even the social capital of the world. He watched the cardinals on richly-caparisoned horses, followed by numerous attendants as they rode through the neighbouring Schnetz gate. He cannot have been entirely unaware of the terrible immorality which the presence of numerous rich and unscrupulous men caused in the city—so great, as the citizens said,

that it would require a century to purge Constance from sin. A man of ascetic and, if we may call it so, puritanic mind, Hus looked on all this with displeasure, and he must have felt strangely isolated in the city. The house in which he lived was constantly watched by numerous spies, who were in the pay of the Bishop of Litomysl. Bishop John was incessantly demanding that Hus should be immediately arrested. Like most of King Venceslas's enemies in Bohemia, he was no doubt on good terms with Sigismund, and knew how difficult it would be for him to sanction the arrest of Hus at Constance if he were himself in the city. The spies and informers, therefore, redoubled their activity. When a hay cart was seen before the house of Hus, the spies immediately reported that Hus intended to escape hidden in it. The tale, which, as we know from Mladenovic, was immediately circulated by Michael and Palec, is found also in the chronicle of Richenthal, that somewhat frivolous writer, who was more interested in enumerating the gains of butchers, fishmongers, and others practising less respectable professions than in studying the serious events connected with the council. It has also been conjectured that Richenthal here confused Hus with Jerome of Prague, who actually made a successful attempt to escape secretly from Constance. It should be mentioned that few serious historians have alluded to Richenthal's tale. A firm adherent of the Roman Church, Baron Helfert, in his interesting work, *Hus und Hieronymus*, rejects the story as decidedly as do all the other writers who have considered it worth mention. Like many other falsehoods, however, this one also served its purpose. We cannot, of course, fathom the true motives of the members of the council, but Bishop John's men could not have found a better pretext for obtaining that which they desired—the immediate imprisonment of Hus. That event can best be told in the words of Mladenovic.[1] He

[1] It has been necessary to abridge considerably the narrative of Mladenovic contained in his *Relatio de M. J. Hus causa.*

writes: "Then shortly after St. Catherine's day, the cardinals who were then at Constance, on November 28, instigated by his (Hus's) enemies, Palec and Michael, sent two bishops, those of Augsburg and Trent, the burgomaster of the city of Constance, and one Hans von Poden, a soldier,[1] to his dwelling-place. They arrived at the hour of dinner and told Lord John of Chlum that they had come on the part of the cardinals and by order of the pope to visit John Hus, and, as he had formerly wished to speak to them, they were now prepared to hear him. Then John of Chlum rose, greatly incensed, and said: 'Know you not, reverend brethren, how and in what fashion Magister John Hus came here? If you know it not, I will tell you that when I and Lord Venceslas of Lestna[2] were in Friulia with our lord the emperor and intended to return to our own country, he ordered us to assure Magister John of his safe-conduct that he might come to this council. Know, therefore, that you must do nothing against the honour of our master.' And to the burgomaster he said in German: 'Thou shouldst know that if the devil came to have his case tried, he should be given a fair hearing.' Then addressing the bishops he continued: 'Our lord the king (Sigismund) also said: "If Magister Hus consents to go to Constance, tell him that on this matter (the question of heresy) he must say nothing except in my presence, when, by the help of God, I shall have come to Constance."' Hearing this, all those who had come, particularly the Bishop of Trent, said, as he answered them in so violent a manner: 'Lord John, we have come only in the interest of peace, that there should be no uproar.' Then rising from table Master John Hus, whom the bishops had not recognised, said: 'I did not come here to see the cardinals, nor to converse with them. I came to the whole council. There will I speak, as God will direct me, and answer on what I am questioned; but on the wish of the cardinals I am ready to come to them,

[1] Poden was the captain of the town guard.
[2] Another title of Lord Venceslas of Duba.

and if they interrogate me, I hope rather to choose death than deny any truth that is known to me from Scripture or otherwise.' "

Mladenovic then describes how the city magistrates had ordered Hus's dwelling-place to be surrounded by armed men, and writes: " When the magister descended the steps, his hostess (the widow Fida) met him, and he took leave of her, saying: ' God's blessing on thee,' and she wept answering him. The bishops, while he descended the steps, said to him: ' Now wilt thou no longer officiate, or say mass.' Then he mounted a poor horse and with the envoys (of the council) and his companion, Lord John of Chlum, rode to the palace of the pope and the cardinals." Mladenovic then tells us that the cardinals informed Hus that many complaints against him had been sent to them from Bohemia. Hus replied that he had come freely to the council, and that if he were convicted of error he would gladly accept instruction.

Before Hus was imprisoned, an event took place which, proving as it does how unscrupulously and energetically the agents of the Bishop of Litomysl strove to deprive him of his liberty, has an importance that is not superficially obvious. It is, however, a fact that, when Palacky was—about the year 1840—publishing the first edition of his monumental history of Bohemia, the ecclesiastical censure office of the Austrian government[1] ordered Palacky to omit all mention of the monk Didacus. Here again it will be well to quote Mladenovic, who was with Hus and Duba during the occurrence. He writes: " They then sent a minorite friar named Didacus, a professor of Holy Writ, who was to sound the master, who was then already in the custody of armed men. He approached him and said: ' Reverend master, I, who am but a simple, ignorant[2] monk, have heard that you assert much that deviates (from the doctrine of the Roman Church), and

[1] See my *History of Bohemian Literature* (2nd ed., pp. 396-398).
[2] " *idiota.*"

so I have come, wishing to know if this is true, and if you hold the views that are attributed to you. Firstly, it is said that you maintain and assert that, after consecration, material bread remains in the sacrament of the altar.' And Magister John Hus: 'I hold not this view,' and he: 'You hold it not?' Then the magister (said): 'No, I hold it not.' When he had given this answer three times, Lord John of Chlum, who was sitting near, said: 'What kind of a man art thou? If some one were once to affirm or deny something to me, I should believe him, but this man has answered thee three times saying: "I hold not this view," and thou continuest to question him.' Then the monk said: 'Noble knight, bear me no ill-will, for I am a simple, uneducated monk, who seeks instruction.' Then when the monk began to question Magister John as to the unity of the human and the divine nature in Christ, the magister said to Lord John in Bohemian: 'This monk says indeed that he is a plain, uneducated man, but he cannot be so very simple, as he questions me on the most profound subjects.' Then, turning to the monk, he said: 'Thou sayest that thou art simple (*simplex*), but I say that thou art false (*duplex*), not simple.' Then the monk said: 'I deny that I am false.'" Mladenovic then reports the continuation of the conversation, or rather of the cross-examination of Hus by the monk. "Then," Mladenovic continues, "the monk left, and the armed men who were standing near, the guards of the supreme pontiff John XXIII., said: 'Know ye who this man was?' And when the magister replied that he knew not, they said: 'He is Magister Didacus, reputed in all Lombardy the most subtle of theologians.' Then Magister Hus said: 'Had I but known it! I would have plied him[1] differently with Scripture. Were they but all like that, with God's aid and the support of Holy Scripture supporting me, I should fear none of them!'" During the time that Hus remained in the bishop's palace, a considerable number of Bohemians

[1] "*pupugissem.*"

had assembled there, who waited in the ante-room to hear the decision of the cardinals. Among them were several friends of Hus, and also Stephen Palec and Michael de causis, the ringleaders of the agents of the Bishop of Litomysl. When they found that Hus would be detained, they displayed ignoble and indecent joy. They danced round the room exclaiming:[1] "Ha! ha! now we have him, he will not escape us till he has paid the last farthing;" by this they meant that he would suffer the supreme penalty, the sentence of death. The cardinals at last sent a message saying that Lord John might depart, but that Hus was to remain in custody. Lord John made a direct appeal to the pope, who declined all responsibility and said that the arrest was the work of the cardinals, with whom he was himself on bad terms. It is very difficult to conjecture the part of the cunning Italian Baldassare Cossa in this matter. Little acquainted with the affairs of Northern Europe, he probably considered Hus a person of very slight importance. Perhaps hoping to win Bohemia to his side, he had at first promised Hus's companions that he would protect him. He now also assured the Bohemian noblemen that he had no part in his arrest. He repeated this assertion afterwards to King Sigismund, when the latter, on arriving at Constance, feigned to be indignant at the imprisonment of Hus. Later, however, when John XXIII. had fled from Constance to Schafhausen and was on terms of enmity with Sigismund, he wrote to the King of France stating that by his order Hus had been imprisoned as a heretic, though Sigismund had endeavoured to protect him. After protesting energetically, Lord John of Duba left the palace, where Hus remained surrounded by armed guards. Peter Mladenovic, as he tells us, brought him his fur coat and a supply of money. In the evening Hus was conveyed to the house of a precentor of the cathedral. After a week—on

[1] "Et saltantes circa aestuarium gaudebant dicentes: Ha! ha! jam habemus eum; non exibit nobis, quousque non reddat minimum quadrantem."

December 6, 1414—he was taken to the Dominican monastery, situated on a small island in the lake that is separated from the rest of the city only by a very narrow course of water.[1] Here he was imprisoned in a gloomy dungeon in the immediate vicinity of the sewer.

The friends of Hus did not meanwhile remain inactive, but their efforts were necessarily futile as they put their trust in Sigismund. The King of Hungary never honestly wished that Hus should be restored to liberty, but in view of the great indignation caused in Bohemia—of which country he considered himself the future king—by the imprisonment of the venerated leader of the nation, he thought it politic to feign displeasure. These repeated expressions of simulated indignation on the part of Sigismund scarcely deserve mention. The loyal Lord John of Chlum, according to the fashion of the time, twice affixed to the gates of the Cathedral of Constance protests against the imprisonment of Hus, referring directly to the imperial safe-conduct. He also wrote to Sigismund, who sent a protest to the pope and the cardinals, of which they—probably aware of the king's real feelings—took no notice. Early in January 1415, the nobles of Moravia, with whom were also Hanus of Lipa, supreme marshal of Bohemia, and other Bohemian lords, met at Mezeric. They addressed to King Sigismund a letter which contained guarded, but yet significant remonstrances. The letter[2] stated that the nobles had heard " that Hus had on his arrival at Constance been arrested and imprisoned while holding a royal safe-conduct, without cause and examination, in a manner contrary

[1] The Dominican monastery is now the Insel Hotel, known to most travellers. The cloisters and the former chapel, now the dining-room, alone recall the former character of the building. To a Bohemian it does not appear that the memory of Hus is held in great honour here. Recently-painted frescoes decorate the cloisters. A small one represents Hus in prison, while one of the largest records one of the least interesting events in modern German history (the meeting at Constance and reconciliation of the German emperor, William I., and the Duke of Nassau, whom Prussia had deprived of his dominions).

[2] Palacky, *Documenta.*

to order, faith, and the royal safe-conduct. There is much talk here and elsewhere," they continued, " among the princes and lords, the poor and rich, concerning the holy father's having acted contrary to order, faith, and the royal letter of safe-conduct,[1] and his having imprisoned a just and innocent man. Therefore, may your majesty graciously deign as king and lord, and eventual heir to the Bohemian throne, to take measures that Master John Hus be delivered from this illegal imprisonment." The question whether the Bohemian crown was elective or hereditary was then and continued for many years afterwards to be uncertain. These words have, therefore, a somewhat menacing note, which is yet more accentuated in a later passage of the letter: " It would indeed," the nobles wrote, " be an offence to the Bohemian crown should anything befall a just man, holding such a safe-conduct. God knows that we should hear with great displeasure that your Majesty's good name suffered through such an event. It would indeed be a reason why many would distrust your Majesty's safe-conduct, and there has already been talk of this."

Sigismund does not appear to have heeded this warning. There is little doubt that he thought that, Hus once removed, the Hussite movement would collapse. Of course, events proved the contrary, but Sigismund's conjecture was not devoid of plausibility. No less a historian than Palacky has written that, had not the exceptional military genius of Zizka enabled the Bohemians to defend their country and their faith, Hus would appear in history as an isolated enthusiast like Savonarola. The admirable organisation of the Bohemian armies and the wisdom which the magisters of the university, particularly the learned Jacobellus, displayed as spiritual leaders of the people, enabled Bohemia to retain for two centuries a national and independent church.

While Hus's friends were endeavouring to help him, his enemies strove with equal energy and greater success to bring

[1] These words are repeated, no doubt to lay stress on them.

about his ruin. They naturally considered it very favourable to their cause that Hus had through their influence been cast into prison. Mainly through the influence of the Bohemian enemies of Hus, who disposed of very large pecuniary means, the council on December 4 appointed three commissioners, John, (titular) patriarch of Constantinople, and the Bishops John of Lübeck and Bernard of Città di Castello, who were to report on the case of Hus. Michael de causis, the Judas of Bohemia, had drawn up a series of accusations against him. The heretical statements of which he was accused were principally derived from Hus's treatise *De Ecclesia*. Some of these accusations were palpably and positively false; thus it was affirmed that Hus had said that the substance of bread remained in the sacrament after consecration and that unworthy priests could not validly administer communion.[1] Much ingenuity was displayed also by Michael's accomplice Palec, who described accusations made by Hus against Pope John XXIII.—far more moderate than those afterwards sanctioned by the council—as general accusations against papacy. It is difficult to imagine a greater amount of ignoble and mendacious sophistry than that which was produced by Michael de causis and Stephen Palec.

It is almost pitiful to imagine the position of a simple, truthful, and honest man as was Hus when attacked by such unscrupulous and mendacious adversaries. He seems himself to have felt the necessity of obtaining legal advice, and begged to be allowed to employ a lawyer for his defence. In distinction from a large number of priests of his day who were better jurists than theologians, Hus had devoted his time to preaching and writing in favour of the cause of church-reform, as well as to theological study. Michael de causis, on the other hand, was the type of the most unscrupulous and cunning

[1] As regards the first point, Hus had already, when questioned by Didacus, denied holding the opinion attributed to him. See p. 218. On the second point Hus long before had expressed views in accordance with the teaching of Rome in his *Super IV. Sententiarum*. See p. 92.

lawyer—priests of a period when the ecclesiastical state was often assumed by unworthy men, because of the advantages and privileges which it conferred.

Hus's request was immediately and sternly refused. It was declared that, according to canon law, no aid could be given to a heretic. Hus only now saw how greatly he had been deceived and how desperate his position was. The mediæval church looked on heretics very much as the Roman emperors looked on the early Christians. They were men outside of the pale of humanity with whom no faith need be kept. The same argument was brought forward later when Hus's safe-conduct was declared invalid. That the refusal to allow Hus to obtain a legal representative sealed his fate was afterwards openly stated by John Gerson, one of the most prominent members of the council. When the proposed condemnation of the monk John Petit (Parvus), who had written in praise of tyrannicide,[1] was discussed, Gerson, indignant at what he considered the unfairness of the council, declared that, had Hus been allowed an advocate, he would never have been convicted of heresy and that he (Gerson) would rather be tried by Jews and pagans than by the members of the council. Hus, though now aware that he had been enticed to Constance entirely on false pretences, could but submit. Palec and Michael continued their proceedings against him with indefatigable energy. Hus, shortly after his imprisonment, had fallen dangerously ill, as he had been placed in a dungeon close to the sewer. With fiendish ingenuity Michael de causis thought that this moment when Hus was weak through illness and deeply depressed by the treachery of which he had been the victim was a favourable one to confront him with as many witnesses as possible. According to the proceedings of the inquisition which were adopted, publicity was excluded, but the witnesses gave their

[1] This matter, which cannot be discussed here, is thoroughly treated by Von der Hardt, Lenfant, and also by Dr. Schwab, *Johannes Gerson.*

evidence on oath in the presence of the accused. Once, when Hus's illness was at its worst, fifteen witnesses were brought into his prison on the same day. It was natural that he should be quite bewildered, and God only, as he afterwards wrote, knew what he suffered. Mladenovic, who enumerates many of those who were made to give evidence against Hus, writes that some of them were very reluctant to do so. A layman, before he was called in, said: "I swear to God that I have nothing to depose." Then Michael de causis said to him: "My good man, you don't know what they will ask you, and you swear that you have nothing to depose. As for me, I would bear witness against my own father if it was (if he was accused of) something against the faith." The result of these investigations was that the commissioners, on the advice of Michael and Stephen Palec, drew up a new act of accusation against Hus consisting of forty-four articles, all derived from the treatise *De Ecclesia*. "These had," Mladenovic writes, "been falsely and unfairly extracted from the book by Palec, who had mutilated some sentences at the beginning, others in the middle, others at the end, and who had also invented things that were not contained in the book at all."

The Bohemian informers uninterruptedly continued their task of persecuting Hus, but the council was now for a time occupied with other matters. On Christmas Day, 1414, Sigismund arrived at Constance. Richenthal, who describes the arrival of such illustrious visitors in his native town with evident pleasure, writes: "On the holy day early, two hours after midnight, came from Ueberlingen to Constance that most noble prince Sigismund, King of the Romans, of Hungary, Dalmatia, Croatia, etc., and with him the most noble princess, Lady Barbara, Queen of the Romans, his spouse, by birth Countess of Cilli, and the most noble princess, Lady Elizabeth, Queen of Bosnia,[1] and also the most noble princess,

[1] Wife of Tvartko of Bosnia, who had been an ally of Sigismund during his wars in Hungary and Dalmatia.

Lady Anne of Wurtemberg, by birth a burgravine of Nuremberg. There came also with the king the most noble elector, Duke Louis of Saxony. After landing from the boats they retired to their apartments and warmed themselves for an hour. Then the citizens of Constance presented them with two golden cloths. The one was carried—as a baldachin—on four poles over the king, the other, also on four poles, over the queen and the Queen of Bosnia. Thus they proceeded to the cathedral, and the pope, wearing a handsome mitre adorned with gold and precious stones, read the first mass on Christmas Day, which they call *Dominus dixit ad me.*" Richenthal then continues to describe the other functions, for the pope, according to custom, said three masses on Christmas Day. He afterwards presented Sigismund with a sword, hoping that he would use it for the defence of the church. The German princes had not at first paid much attention to the council. The schism and the violent and undignified controversies between the adherents of the rival popes, which had been its consequence, had caused the clergy to fall in Germany into a state of contempt and disesteem, which is not the less certain because little written evidence of this feeling remains.[1] The Bohemian writers of the fifteenth century who so strongly attacked papacy and the Roman Church certainly met with more sympathy in Germany than is usually supposed. The German princes, therefore, felt little inclined to go to Constance to greet Pope John XXIII. Some of their number, such as the Archbishop of Trier, still acknowledged the obedience of Pope Gregory XII. After the arrival of Sigismund, the head of the empire and—since his recent coronation at Aachen—emperor, a great change took place in this respect. In January 1415, the Bavarian princes, Louis Count Palatine—who played a prominent part at the execution of Hus—and Dukes Henry and Louis, arrived at Constance. Other new arrivals were, the

[1] This is, of course, only true of the early part of the fifteenth century. There are, as is known, countless German writings with anti-papal tendency belonging to the sixteenth century.

burgraves John and Frederick of Nuremberg, Duke Frederick of Austria, the Margrave of Baden, and the Elector-Archbishop John of Maintz. This prelate rode into Constance in full armour, a fact that scandalised even the large-minded Richenthal.

Sigismund, whose dominant characteristic, next to perfidy, was puerile vanity, greatly rejoiced over his position as leader of so brilliant an assembly. He had undoubtedly succeeded in renewing the waning prestige of the Roman crown. Though Hus's loyal Bohemian friends continued to bring their unwelcome grievances before Sigismund, he felt little interest in the case of the pious and humble Bohemian priest. He knew him to be under lock and key, and had decided long ago that he should never return to his native country. No one at the council probably attached the slightest importance to the protestations against Hus's imprisonment, which Sigismund still thought it politic to make. The members of the council were now entirely absorbed in the conflict between the papacy and the college of cardinals. The position of Sigismund was a difficult one. Immediately after his arrival at Constance, Baldassare Cossa had attempted to win him over to his side by the offer of a gift of 200,000 florins.[1] The emperor declined this offer, probably considering the pope's position as already hopeless, or distrusting his promise. It appeared certain that even the laxity of morals of that period, almost inconceivable as we now consider it, would in the long run not accept a man such as the *diavolo cardinale* as head of the Catholic Church. Sigismund therefore arrived at the conclusion that it was only by forcing John XXIII., as well as Gregory XII. and Benedict XIII., to abdicate that the termination of the schism could be assured.

Sigismund therefore soon assumed a conciliatory attitude towards the council. He entirely gave up his insincere

[1] Dr. Aschbach (*Geschichte Kaiser Sigmunds*, vol. ii. p. 38), who makes this statement, founds it on documentary evidence. There is nothing in the character either of Sigismund or of Baldassare Cossa to render it improbable.

demand that Hus should be released from prison, and in contradiction to his former, probably also disingenuous, desire that the council should first devote its attention to church-reform, he now consented to its first discussing the schism. The negotiations between John XXIII. and Sigismund, between the pope and the college of cardinals, the dissensions between the cardinals and the other members of the council—all these events here require but brief mention. To exercise a certain pressure on John XXIII., it was decided that the council should not be considered as a continuation of that of Pisa, which had deposed Popes Gregory and Benedict. Representatives of these pontiffs were, therefore, allowed to appear before the council and the emperor. The representatives of Gregory declared that their master was willing to renounce the papal throne if John and Benedict did likewise, and Benedict's envoys expressed themselves in a manner that was interpreted as expressing a similar intention. John XXIII., however, who denied the analogy between his own case and that of Gregory and Benedict, who had been deposed by the Council of Pisa, took up a very intransigent attitude. His partisans among the members of the council, however, constantly diminished in number, particularly after a document attributed to an Italian priest had been circulated, which contained a detailed account of all the crimes and sins committed by Baldassare Cossa. The document, probably published for the purpose of intimidating the pope, was promptly suppressed, but many of the unspeakable accusations contained in it were embodied in the act of deposition of John XXIII., which was published on May 25, 1415. A resolution of the council had meanwhile altered the system of voting at its deliberations, and had greatly reduced the power of the minor Italian ecclesiastics, who were Pope John's principal adherents. He therefore determined to yield. At a general meeting of the council held on February 16, in the presence of Sigismund, Cardinal Zabarella read out a state-

ment of John XXIII. He declared that he was prepared of his own accord and for the good of the church to descend from the throne of St. Peter if the two claimants to the papacy, who had been deposed and condemned as heretics by the Council of Pisa, would in a manner and at a time which he would determine in accordance with the members of the council, renounce the titles which they had usurped.[1] This declaration, and another which John afterwards submitted, were considered insufficient, and a document drawn up by members of the council and transmitted to the pope by Sigismund was rejected by him. He declared that the wording of the document presented to him was almost identical with that of the document containing the renunciation of Gregory XII., between whose case and his own there was, Pope John maintained, a very considerable difference. Finally, on March 1, John XXIII. accepted and signed a document[2] which contained a formal renunciation of the papal throne. He declared that of his own free will and for the sake of the peace of the church, he entirely renounced all claims to the papal throne, and that he made no other condition except that Peter of Luna and Angelo Correr, known in their obediences as Benedict XIII. and Gregory XII., should do likewise. This renunciation was received with universal rejoicings, and when John XXIII. on the following day solemnly confirmed it by his oath in the cathedral before the members of the council and the emperor, all present burst into tears.

Baldassare Cossa—as he now again became—though "entrapped," as he would have expressed it, and daunted for a moment, was by no means at the end of his resources. It has already been mentioned that Cossa had on his journey to Constance met Duke Frederick of Austria, and that a thorough understanding had sprung up between them. This was of greatest importance to the pope, as the territory of the Habs-

[1] Von der Hardt, *Magnum oecumenicum Constantiense Concilium*, T. ii. P. viii. p. 233.

[2] Printed by Von der Hardt, T. ii. P. iv. p. 45.

burg prince extended to the immediate vicinity of Constance. Frederick, who had become a mortal enemy of the house of Luxemburg, was by no means unwilling to frustrate the plans of Sigismund and to render the council abortive. Probably immediately after his renouncement, Cossa determined to leave Constance and to fly to Schafhausen, the nearest city within the territory of Duke Frederick. He was, however, obliged to act with great caution. It was rumoured at Constance that he intended to leave the city, and this rumour was intensified by the fact that he refused to conform to the formalities necessary to render his renunciation absolute, and thus obstructed the proceedings of the council. This caused great indignation among the members of that assembly, and at one of its meetings the Bishop of Salisbury is said to have declared that Cossa deserved to be burnt at the stake. According to Dietrich of Niem, Cossa made another offer of money to Sigismund, and on being questioned by the emperor with regard to his future plans formally protested that he had no intention of leaving Constance before the council was dissolved. The cunning Italian did not think it necessary to add that, according to his belief, his own departure would necessarily entail the dissolution of the council.

On March 20 Baldassare Cossa effected his escape. He had settled in accord with Duke Frederick that a tournament, under the auspices of the duke, should on that day be held outside the walls of Constance. While all the citizens were watching the proceedings, Cossa made his escape, riding in disguise to Ermattingen, whence a boat that was waiting conveyed him to Schafhausen. Duke Frederick followed him as soon as he was able to leave the place of tournament without attracting attention, and joined him at Schafhausen. Their departure caused a panic at Constance, and it seemed probable for a moment that the council would break up. The papal soldiers who guarded Hus left the city shortly after their master, but Sigismund, as will be mentioned later, did not use

this opportunity to set the prisoner free. In consequence of the energy of Sigismund, aided by the influence of John Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris, a rupture was averted, and the council continued its sittings. At the memorable meeting of that assembly on March 30, the superiority of a general council over the pope was proclaimed,[1] and it was also declared that all future decrees of Pope John XXIII. should be invalid. Through the influence of Sigismund the council also took proceedings against Duke Frederick of Austria, on whom Sigismund pronounced the imperial ban. He also declared war on him, and proclaimed that all should be free to acquire any portion of Frederick's territory which they might conquer. The Swiss, who had by a recent treaty pledged themselves under oath not to attack Frederick, were informed by the council that, as they had pledged themselves to a heretic, the oath was invalid, and that they were justified in waging war against the Duke of Austria. It is beyond my purpose to enter into details concerning the campaign that followed. Frederick was defeated everywhere, and was obliged to proceed to Constance and there make his humble submission to the emperor. Pope John XXIII. fled from Schafhausen before the surrender of the town to the imperial forces. He first proceeded to Laufenburg, and then to Freiburg in Breisgau, from where he addressed a letter to the council proposing an agreement. The terms he offered were, however, rejected. From Freiburg Cossa went to Breisach, and here, in his usual tortuous manner, entered into negotiations with the envoys sent to him by the council. Meanwhile, however, Duke Frederick had submitted to the emperor, and had among other stipulations agreed to give up all support of Baldassare Cossa. The latter returned to Freiburg, and now gave up all attempts of resistance. Accompanied by the representatives of the council, and guarded by 300 Hungarian

[1] This declaration of the Council of Constance was often mentioned when the question of papal infallibility was under discussion.

soldiers sent by Sigismund, he proceeded to Radolfzell, there to await his final sentence. He was here informed of the decree published by the council on May 25, which, after enumerating all his crimes, declared him to be " an abettor of simoniacs, a mirror of infamy, an idolator of the flesh and one whom all who knew him considered a devil incarnate," and proclaimed his deposition from the papal throne.[1] Cossa offered no further resistance, and gave up the insignia of papacy without any opposition. From Radolfzell he was conveyed to Gottlieben, a castle about eight miles from Constance, which for some time served also as a prison for Hus. As he was suspected of intriguing with his Italian friends in Constance, Sigismund placed him in the custody of Louis Count Palatine, by whose order he was removed to the castle of Heidelberg. He remained there up to the termination of the Council of Constance. He soon made his peace with the Roman Church, and submitted to Pope Martin V., by whom he was again created a cardinal. He retired to Florence, where he died on December 22, 1418. His tomb in the Battisterio by Michelozzo and Donatello is a noble work of the early Italian renaissance. It is striking to contrast his end with that of Hus. While the *diavolo cardinale* died surrounded with all honours and was buried in a magnificent tomb that is still admired by all visitors to Florence, Hus died by that hideous and painful death which mediæval Christianity seems to have borrowed from Nero, while his ashes were scattered and thrown into the Rhine.

Before returning to Hus, who remained imprisoned in and near Constance during the momentous events that occurred in that city, it will be necessary to refer to events in Bohemia that had considerable influence on the fate of Hus. The pious congregation at Bethlehem and the Bohemian patriots and church-reformers generally had been anxious for the safety of Hus from the moment that he had crossed the

[1] The decree of the council is printed by Von der Hardt.

boundaries of his native land. Many previous treacherous acts of Sigismund, particularly those that were connected with his brother Venceslas, were in the memory of all. In consequence of the intense interest in the fate of Hus that was general among the citizens of Prague, theological reflection and discussion became their constant and all-absorbing occupation. Only a few weeks after the departure of Hus a religious innovation was introduced, which, though only a return to a very ancient tradition, yet greatly irritated the opponents of church-reform. Lawrence of Brezova writes,[1] "In the year of the incarnation 1414, the reverend and noble Magister Jacobellus of Stribro (Mies), bachelor of holy theology, with the support of other priests, began to administer the venerable and divine sacrament of eucharistic communion in the two kinds, that is to say, in the species of bread and of wine, in the famed and magnificent city of Prague." The new custom was first adopted in the churches of St. Adalbertus in the new town and St. Martin-in-the-Wall, St. Michael, and the Bethlehem chapel in the old town. The influence of this step on the fate of Hus, and yet more on the subsequent Hussite movement, was very great. It has long and often been discussed why the question of communion in the two kinds, or utraquism as it soon began to be called, acquired such great importance in Bohemia. The formerly general supposition that the tradition of communion in the two kinds continued from the time when Bohemia and Moravia first received Christianity from the East has, in consequence of the recent works of Bohemian scholars, particularly of Professor Kalousek,[2] become very improbable. It is also certain that Jacobellus—in many respects a pupil of Matthew of Janov—did not derive from Matthew his utraquistic teaching. Matthew indeed wrote and spoke in favour of frequent communion but did not mention communion in the two kinds.

[1] Laurentii de Brezova, "Historia Hussitica" (*Fontes Rerum Bohemicarum*, vol. v. p. 338).

[2] Particularly in his *O historii Kalicha v dobach predhusitskych* (Story of the Chalice in Prehussite Times).

It has already been stated that both these demands were closely connected in the minds of the Bohemian people, to whom it appeared unjust that the priests—among whom were many of the vilest men in the land—should claim to receive holy communion more frequently and in a more complete manner than pious laymen. It is on the whole most probable that the deep study of the evangelical words pronounced at the institution of the sacrament convinced Jacobellus of the lawfulness of utraquism.

The custom of administering communion in the two kinds began at Prague about the time when Hus was dangerously ill at the Dominican monastery, and he was not immediately informed of it. The news reached Palec more rapidly and he accused Hus of being responsible for the teaching of utraquism. The latter was probably then too ill to understand the drift of Palec's words, particularly as the question of utraquism had not been discussed before his departure from Prague. Early in January 1415 Hus's health began to improve and he was about this time moved to a less unsanitary cell in the Dominican monastery. To the papal commissioners who visited him he declared that the articles of accusation against him were largely drawn from passages quoted wrongly from his writings, and that the articles also attributed to him statements which he had never made. The commissioners merely answered that the articles were the work of his Bohemian enemies. Michael de causis was meanwhile more indefatigable than ever. He was more constantly in the prison than even the gaolers, acting as spy, and also abstracting the letters sent or received by Hus. To incite the commissioners against Hus he gave them totally untruthful information concerning him, calculated to render him odious. Thus when visiting Hus one of the commissioners said: "Thou possessest 70,000 florins;"[1] another, "Thou hast founded a new law;" yet another, "Thou then

[1] This at that time signified an enormous sum; according to Dr. Flajshans, about 4,000,000 Austrian crowns (£200,000).

hast taught all these articles." Hus could but answer: "Why do you wrong me?"[1] The ignoble Michael de causis was allowed to accompany the commissioners on their visits to Hus and even grossly to insult him in their presence—a fact which alone proves what a wretched parody of justice the whole trial was. There is little doubt that this licence granted to Michael was largely the result of the vast sums of money collected and distributed by the Bishop of Litomysl. Palec, though also demanding that Hus should be immediately executed, behaved with more reserve than Michael. Stephen Palec was a narrow-minded bigot, but not an unprincipled scoundrel like Michael de causis.

One of the Bohemian letters—they are always more impressive than the Latin ones—written by Hus at this time and dated January 19, 1415, gives a good insight into his feelings. The letter, addressed to the citizens of Prague, runs thus: "May God deign to be with you, that you may resist the evil, the devil, the world, and the flesh. Dearest, I beg you—sitting in prison, of which I am not ashamed, for I suffer in good hope for the Lord God, who graciously afflicted me with a severe illness, but has now restored me to health and who permitted that those should become my enemies to whom I did much good and whom I loved much—I beg you[2] to pray to God for me that He may deign to be with me; for it is through Him alone and through your prayers that I hope to remain in His grace unto my death. If He deigns now to call me to Him, be it according to His holy will; if He deigns to restore me to you, then also be His will fulfilled. Indeed I require much help, but I know that He will not subject me to any suffering or temptation except for my own, and for your good, so that, having been tested and having remained steadfast, we may obtain great reward. Be it known to you that

[1] Flajshans, *Mistr Jan Hus*, pp. 415-416.

[2] Hus's style is here rather involved. It is, however, so characteristic of the writer that I have thought it best to translate the letter literally.

that letter, which I sent to you after starting on my journey,[1] has become public, and has been translated wrongly into Latin. They have also produced so many articles and accusations against me that I have much to write answering them all here from prison. There is no one who can help me except our merciful Lord Jesus who said: I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.[2] Remember, dearest, that I have zealously worked with you, and that I always hope for your salvation, now also when I am in prison and much tormented."

On March 20, as already mentioned, Pope John XXIII. escaped from Constance in disguise. Hus appears at that time to have become somewhat more hopeful, perhaps because a few friends had been allowed to visit him—a great solace to a man whose health at this moment was again failing and who had lived for months surrounded only by enemies and spies. The aged Master Christian of Prachatice and John of Jesenice, two of Hus's comrades during the long-protracted struggle against the simonists at Prague, visited him, not heeding the great danger which they incurred. Hus no doubt informed them of the treachery on the part of the council of which he had been the victim, and they both succeeded in escaping from Constance during the troubles that followed the flight of Cossa. Jerome of Prague also appeared for a short time at Constance, though Hus had begged him not to do so. He departed again almost immediately. Here, as ever, the presence of Jerome was very harmful to Hus. Another visitor was Lord Venceslas of Duba, the trusted friend and protector of Hus. He burst into tears on seeing him, and informed him

[1] In this letter—written in Bohemian—Hus had stated that he had left Prague without a letter of safe-conduct. We do not know what form this statement took when translated into Latin by Michael and Palec. Hus was travelling, accompanied by representatives of Sigismund who approved of his not waiting at Prague for the arrival of the letter. Some modern apologists of Sigismund have, following the example of Hus's persecutors, maintained that the safe-conduct became invalid because Hus did not carry it on his journey.

[2] St. Luke xxi. 15.

of the steps which the nobles of his country were taking for his defence. These attempts at intervention on the part of Hus's countrymen have already been mentioned, and I shall have again to refer to them later. Duba may also have informed Hus of the intended flight of Cossa, as his intention of escaping from Constance was mooted in the city several days before the event actually took place. This would inspire hope in the minds of both Hus and Duba. Cossa departed, Sigismund was undisputed master of the city of Constance, and it was entirely in his power to liberate Hus. On March 24, Palm Sunday, Hus wrote to his friends at Constance informing them that his guards had left him. On the same evening an armed force of a hundred and seventy men, sent by the Bishop of Constance, seized Hus and conveyed him to the bishop's castle of Gottlieben.[1] Immediately after the departure of Cossa, Sigismund, fearing that Hus might escape him, conferred with the most important members of the council, and it was decided that Hus should be placed in the custody of the Bishop of Constance. That Sigismund failed to use this opportunity of liberating Hus greatly disappointed the Bohemians, and has also caused the surprise of some modern writers. A closer study of the character of Sigismund would show that he had firmly resolved that Hus should never leave Constance, or at least never return to his native land.

The imprisonment at Gottlieben was for Hus in every way a change for the worse. The tower at Gottlieben, still known as the " Hussenthurm," in one of the highest cells of which he was confined, was indeed, from a sanitary point of view, preferable to the Dominican monastery at Constance. But Hus now for the first time endured all the horrors of a mediæval prison. He was chained to a post, at day time by the hands only, at night also by the feet, and suffered continually from hunger and thirst. His German guards were allowed to treat him with the utmost cruelty, while the Italian soldiers of

[1] On the Rhine below Constance, now in the Swiss canton of Thurgan.

Cossa had treated him with cordial, if contemptuous, kindness. It is certain that it was intended, according to the methods of the Inquisition, entirely to break his spirit by what was practically torture. It was hoped that he would thus be induced to confess anything and everything which it was desirable that he should confess. He had hitherto been allowed to write and to receive letters, but all this was stopped at Gottlieben. We know, therefore, little of what occurred there, and a veil has perhaps mercifully been thrown over Hus's stay at Gottlieben.

The powers of the commissioners appointed by Pope John XXIII. were considered as having ended with the flight of that pontiff. The council, in which the party of the cardinals now had the upper hand, appointed Cardinals D'Ailly, Filastre, and Zabarella to act as commissioners, and continue the examination of Hus. Of these men D'Ailly was the most prominent, and his marked hostility to Hus has often been noted. The active part taken by the Cardinal of Cambray in the condemnation of Hus is indeed the best known part of his career. As Dr. Tschackert, the biographer of D'Ailly, writes: "D'Ailly now showed that historically memorable activity which throws on the not otherwise very bright record of his life a shadow that is all the darker, the brighter appears the memory of him whose death at the stake he helped to bring about."[1] The reasons for D'Ailly's hostility to Hus are numerous. The dispute between nominalists and realists no doubt played a part, but Hus's repeated eulogy of the poverty of the clergy must have been particularly obnoxious to D'Ailly. This very important motive seems to have been kept in the background by many historians. D'Ailly was noted for his greed for money. His eager endeavours to secure benefices and to amass riches exposed him to the sometimes very severe comments of his contemporaries.[2]

[1] Dr. Tschackert, *Peter v. Ailly*, p. 225.
[2] See the "tractatus Bonifacii (Ferrer) prioris Carthusiae majoris" in

The new commissioners visited Hus several times at Gottlieben. They found him weak through hunger and suffering, broken in spirit, meek, and patient. It cannot be considered generous on the part of D'Ailly that he should, when Hus at his trial gave a somewhat spirited reply, have taunted him with the remark, "You spoke more meekly when you were in the tower." The council, now freed from Baldassare Cossa and by no means desirous of entering on the disagreeable subject of church-reform, devoted all its energy to the extirpation of heresy. Before finally coming to a conclusion with regard to the fate of Hus, they published a declaration enumerating forty-five articles taken from the works of Wycliffe which had been condemned as heretical by the council held in Rome in 1412. As it could be proved that similar and in some cases identical statements were contained in the works of Hus, this in the opinion of all signified the condemnation of Hus. Hus had indeed, as has been frequently mentioned, declared that he did not identify himself with Wycliffe, that he did not accept all his views, and that he might have understood some of them in a sense different from that accepted by the council. Any one who has even a slight acquaintance with the writings of Wycliffe, "his voluminous writings in scholastic Latin, crabbed, harsh, and intricate to the last degree," as Dr. Bigg writes, will consider this very probable. Hus may have wished to state this before the council, but was never given a fair hearing there. Any remark made by him that appeared inconvenient was always interrupted.

I must now refer to the last attempts, previous to the trial, made by the Bohemians to save their countryman. The nobles of Moravia met at Brno (Brünn) on May 8, 1415, and sent a spirited remonstrance to Sigismund. They stated[1]

Martene et Durand, *Thesaurus*, II., p. 1436. The writer, a firm adherent of Pope Benedict XIII., may have been somewhat prejudiced against D'Ailly.

[1] Palacky, *Documenta*.

that they must again complain of the treatment of "John Hus, a just man and preacher, a faithful and praiseworthy furtherer of the Holy Gospel, of whom no evil is known in these lands. Yet," they continued, "this dear master and Christian preacher has been imprisoned because of false and foul calumnies spread by evil men, slanderers and enemies of God's word. Through the dishonourable calumnies against this man, all the lands of the Bohemian crown and the Slavic nation [1] have been guiltlessly defamed. He (Hus) went freely without any compulsion to the universal council at Constance, and wished as a good and faithful Christian to free himself and his country from unjust accusations before a general council of the whole Christian world. He received from your Majesty a letter of safe-conduct, though so good a man did not require one." After further remarks concerning the safe-conduct, the letter continues thus: "But also we hear that when the pope fled, as well as those who guarded him (Hus), he was taken from his prison—it is best known to God by whose order—and transferred to a more cruel prison belonging to the Bishop of Constance, where he has been cruelly and in an unchristian fashion fettered by the hands and feet and denied even that amount of justice which it would be seemly to grant to a heathen." The letter ends with the words: "We trust that your Majesty will grant your full attention to this matter, as is fitting for the kind and gracious heir and successor to our land." A similar letter was sent from Prague four days later by the assembled nobles of Bohemia. Both letters bear the signatures of almost all the men then prominent in Bohemia and Moravia—if we except the dignitaries of the church. The letters, written in Bohemian, were translated into Latin by Palacky as long ago as 1869, but they have not been much noticed by historians. The Bohemian nobles at Constance—besides those who had accompanied Hus, a few others had arrived, wishing to be near him in the hour of danger—

[1] Or "language." The Bohemian word *jazyk* has both significations.

resolved also to make a last attempt to save the life of their countryman. Their step was not without danger; they had no power to act as representatives of King Venceslas, who declined all relations with the council. Other Bohemians, noted members of the university, had been driven out of Constance by the emissaries of Michael de causis, and some had with difficulty escaped with their lives. The nobles were but too well aware of the treachery innate in Sigismund, though they may have thought that he would at least during the lifetime of Hus endeavour to avoid a general uprising in Bohemia. Associated with the Bohemians were a few Polish noblemen. They were—in distinction from the Bohemians—present as representatives of the King of Poland, therefore shielded by diplomatic immunity and restricted by the customary reserve of diplomatists. Yet they did not hesitate to intervene in favour of a member of the kindred Bohemian nation who in Poland also was by many already considered as a saint.

Mladenovic gives a detailed account of the intervention of the nobles of Poland and Bohemia in favour of Hus.[1] "While he (Hus)," Mladenovic writes, "was lying in fetters in the fort (Gottlieben), the noble lords, knights, and squires of the Bohemian and Polish nations were moved by their love of truth, and of the honour and fame of the illustrious kingdom of Bohemia, which had now become a laughing-stock, and an infamous object of shame to its enemies, even to strangers of the meanest birth. They therefore resolved to recover and restore its ancient glory, of which they were heirs, and they determined to insist that John Hus, once their preacher and instructor, now deprived of all human aid, should at least have the opportunity of publicly expressing his opinions." On May 13, the nobles drew up a statement which was to

[1] *Relatio*, pp. 256-272. Only a brief account of the prolonged negotiations, in consequence of which at least the semblance of a public trial was granted to Hus, can be given here.

be brought before the council. They complained that Hus, "who had never been convicted or condemned or even heard," should have been imprisoned. They demanded that he should be publicly heard that he might render account of his faith. A passage near the end of the document caused some sensation. It stated that enemies of the illustrious kingdom of Bohemia had said that the sacrament of the most holy blood of the Lord had been carried about there in flasks, that cobblers had confessed the faithful and had administered the sacrament. The nobles begged that these calumnies should not be believed, and that the delators should be named, that they might receive condign punishment from the King of Bohemia. The last words contained a direct accusation against Michael de causis and the other Bohemian informers, as well as against their leader, the Bishop of Litomysl.

This statement was by Peter of Mladenovic read to the assembled council, that is to say, to the members of the four "nations" into which the council had some time previously been divided to limit the influence of the Italian partisans of Baldassare Cossa. It was received in silence, except when the passage concerning the calumniators of Bohemia was read out. Bishop John of Litomysl, rising up immediately, exclaimed in his own language: "Ha! ha! tot'se mne dotyce a mych."[1] In a letter addressed to the council on May 16, the iron bishop protested against the accusation that he was a calumniator of his country, and declared that the communion of laymen in the two kinds had led or at least would lead to many abuses—a statement with which we meet constantly during the utraquist controversy in Bohemia, which only ended in 1620.

The council sent an evasive answer written by the Bishop of Carcassone, and the nobles of Bohemia protested against the statements of John of Litomysl in a letter that was probably also from the clever though prolix pen of Mladenovic.

[1] "Ha! ha! This regards me and my friends."

They maintained that none of the outrages mentioned by Bishop John had actually occurred. It is a fact that, though matters changed after the treacherous murder of Hus, no act of sacrilege had at that time been committed in Bohemia. The Bohemians also again appealed to the Emperor Sigismund, an act that does more credit to their ingenuousness than to their sagacity. Sigismund, who, by a decree of April 8, had revoked all letters of safe-conduct previously granted by him, now shielded himself entirely under the authority of the council and did not reply to the appeal of the Bohemians.

None the less the Bohemians, encouraged by the news that their countrymen at Prague and Brno had protested against the imprisonment of Hus, attempted to appeal again to the council. Mladenovic, again acting as spokesman, delivered a lengthy speech before the members of the council assembled in the refectory of the minorite monastery. After again referring to Sigismund's letter of safe-conduct, he made the important suggestion that Hus, who had been neither convicted nor condemned, should be delivered from the fetters and chains in which he was now cruelly imprisoned, and should be placed in the custody of some bishops, or worthy men, appointed by the council, who would examine him and confer with him, when he had recovered his health. The nobles of Bohemia were meanwhile prepared to provide sureties—men who would not break their faith for anything in the world, and who would guarantee that Hus would make no attempt whatever to escape from Constance before his case was judged.

To this new proposal the council returned an immediate answer. On the very day of the speech of Mladenovic—May 31—the patriarch of Antioch, in the name of the delegates of the council, declared that with regard to the alleged misrepresentation of Hus's statements, those acquainted with his language would decide. As the men thus referred to were the Bishop of Litomysl, Palec, and Michael de causis, his bitterest enemies

and most venomous calumniators, the injustice was flagrant. The patriarch further stated that the members of the council would not liberate Hus if a thousand sureties were brought forward, for it would be against their conscience to place such a man, whom they could not trust, in the hands of sureties. The delegates of the council were, however, willing to accede to the petition of the lords and to grant Hus a fair and public hearing. " What and how constituted the hearing was, and how far it was kindly "—the good Mladenovic adds—" will be seen when I describe the doings of the tribunal."

The Bohemian lords had undoubtedly obtained a success [1] —the only one they achieved during their arduous, dangerous, and from the first hopeless, campaign in favour of Hus. Hus was, at least, to appear before his judges. Though the proceedings at his trial were a mere parody of justice, and he was scarcely ever allowed to speak, his appearance was in itself a mute protest against the tyranny of a corrupt hierarchy.

[1] Of the many writers on the trial of Hus none has better understood this than the late Mr. Wratislaw. He writes (*John Hus*, p. 261): " Instead of a secret inquisition and secret murder, we have the record of a public trial and a judicial homicide, in which we are at a loss to discover any valid or reasonable ground of condemnation." The book of Mr. Wratislaw, written nearly thirty years ago, is still valuable though it has become somewhat antiquated.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE TRIAL AND DEATH OF HUS

THOUGH the council had been obliged to grant Hus a public hearing, it did so most reluctantly and with the firm intention that he should be declared guilty and under all circumstances prevented from returning to Bohemia—on this Sigismund laid great stress. During a deliberation of the council, which immediately preceded the trial, it was resolved that, should Hus not retract, he should be handed over to the secular authorities to receive condign punishment. By a legal fiction the church avoided ordering the execution of the sentence. Death at the stake was the penalty for heresy according to a law of the Emperor Frederick II., who, as Dr. Lenz writes in his clever defence of the conduct of the council,[1] "cannot be considered a friend of the popes, and still less an ultramontane." Though the matter will have to be mentioned again later, it should here already be stated that Sigismund had pledged his honour to allow Hus to return to Bohemia from Constance, whatever sentence might have been passed on him there. The secular authority to whom Hus should have been handed over was his own sovereign, King Venceslas, not the burgomaster of Constance. The possibility of Hus's retracting had also been taken into consideration. It was decided that in that case Hus should, in punishment of the scandal which he had caused, be imprisoned for life in a Swedish monastery, in a cell that was to be walled up, leaving only a small opening through which food and drink were to be handed to the prisoner.[2]

[1] *Uceni mistra Jana Husi* (the Teaching of Master John Hus), p. 361.
[2] Dr. Flajshans, *Mistr Jan Hus*, p. 361.

On the morning of June 5 Hus was conveyed from the Tower of Gottlieben to the monastery of the Franciscan order [1] at Constance, which was to be the last of his prisons. The members of the council who were to interrogate Hus, with Cardinal D'Ailly as their head, assembled in the refectory of the Franciscan monastery, and many other members were also present. The accusations against Hus were read out before he was admitted into the hall. As Mladenovic writes in a passage which I have already quoted, many statements never made by Hus were attributed to him and many passages quoted from his writings had been falsified. We meet with this complaint frequently, and it appears to have been one of the principal grievances of Hus. He began now to see that the trial was a mere formality by means of which Sigismund wished to appease the increasing irritation of the Bohemians. A significant incident which occurred at the very beginning of the trial was at any rate sufficient to dispel whatever illusions Hus and his companions may still have preserved. Before Hus appeared in the hall the document stating the accusations against him, which have been so often mentioned, and ending with his condemnation had been prepared and was shown to some of the members of the assembly. A young Bohemian named Oldrich who was present [2] succeeded in obtaining a glance at the document and read in it the passage which contained the condemnation of Hus and several statements of importance for the trial. A forged letter was referred to, in which Hus was purported to have written that, should he retract his teaching at Constance, such a retraction was to be considered as obtained by force and therefore invalid.[3] It

[1] Between the cathedral and the church of St. Stephen. The building is now used as barracks.

[2] Lenfant, *Histoire du Concile de Constance* (p. 199) and Von der Hardt (T. iv. pp. 196, 306) state that Mladenovic himself discovered the document. This is contradicted by Mladenovic's own report, quoted above. Mladenovic cautiously gives only the initials of the names of the persons concerned.

[3] "Quale mendacium! Omnipotens Deus." Mladenovic writes with not unnatural indignation.

was intended by this cunning device to prevent Hus's regaining his liberty, even should he retract the statements to which objection was made; this, as he repeatedly declared, he was prepared to do, if contrary evidence were produced. Oldrich immediately informed Mladenovic of what he had seen, and the latter reported to Lord Venceslas of Duba and John of Chlum that the sentence on Hus had already been drawn up. The Bohemian nobles appealed to Sigismund. No one was more anxious than was the King of Hungary that Hus should, under all circumstances, be prevented from returning to Bohemia. He was not, however, under the circumstances, able to show his true feelings, and indeed feigned anger and indignation. He sent Louis Count Palatine and Frederick Burgrave of Nuremberg to the members of the council, ordering them not to condemn Hus immediately, but first to grant him a hearing.

Hus was now introduced into the hall. He had previously sent to Lords Duba and Chlum the original manuscripts of his book *De Ecclesia*, and of his writings against Palec and Stanislas of Znoymo. The articles that were now read out contained many extracts from these works, but whether these quotations were genuine, and to what extent they were the work of Palec and Michael was not examined during the so-called trial. Hus contented himself with declaring that if there was anything evil or erroneous in his writings, he was ready humbly to amend it. After the articles, the depositions of the witnesses were read out. Hus then attempted to speak, but was immediately interrupted by loud cries "as with one voice." Those of his friends who had been unable to enter the hall, but remained outside, heard him "turning now to the right, now to the left, now forward, now backward, answering those who were crying out at him and assailing him." When he wished to point out ambiguities contained in the act of accusation and to declare that the accusers had interpreted certain statements contained in his writings in a manner

different from that which he had intended, even louder cries arose. Some screamed: "Abandon all sophistry, say Yes or No;" others began to deride him. The tumult became yet greater when Hus attempted to quote the holy fathers of the church. All cried: "This is of no importance! this is not to the question!" When Hus, seeing that the assembly had determined to prevent his being heard, ceased speaking, all cried out to him: "Behold, thou art silent, thou hast admitted thy errors!"[1] Writing to Lord John of Chlum in the evening of June 5, Hus says: "All cried out at me, as did the Jews against Jesus." Still hoping that he might be treated more fairly at another meeting, he writes not quite hopelessly at the end of the same letter: "I doubt whether they will allow me to quote the views of St. Augustine on the *praedestinati* and *praesciti*, or on evil prelates." The proceedings on the first day of Hus's trial were so scandalous[2] that it was determined to suspend the sitting and continue the trial on June 7.

On June 7, the second day of the trial, a total eclipse of the sun took place. It was particularly noticed by the pious citizens of Prague, who believed that it foreshadowed the doom of their beloved master.[3] Darkness also covered the city of Constance, and lights had to be lit in the refectory when the trial was resumed. A large body of Hungarian mercenaries had been placed in the refectory by Sigismund's

[1] This account is abridged from the narrative of Mladenovic, who was present at the trial of Hus.

[2] The proceedings of the Council of Constance were often very turbulent —not only on the occasion of the trial of Hus. They sometimes resembled the sittings of certain modern parliaments. Thus Pope John XXIII., when complaining to the King of France of the conduct of the emperor, accused Sigismund of having sent to the meetings of the council men of low rank, who interrupted the cardinals and prelates. Then "sibilabatur et fiebat eis (the prelates) tanta injuria quod oportebat ipsos obmutescere et abire confuse" (Tosti, *History of the Council of Constance*).

[3] Lawrence of Brezova writes: "Item VII. die mensis Junii, qui erat feria VI. post Bonifacii hora XI. ecclipsatus est totus sol ita quod non poterant missae sine luminibus celebrari in signum quod sol Justiciae Christus in cordibus praelatorum multorum ad mortem Magistri Johannis Hus de proximo per concilium mortificandi anhelantium fuit obscuratus." (*Fontes rerum Bohemicarum*, v. 338.)

order. The emperor still feared or feigned to fear that Hus would escape him. Articles of accusation against Hus were again read out, and the first subject discussed were the difficult questions connected with the sacrament, the remanence of bread, and transubstantiation. Hus seems to have been allowed a somewhat greater liberty of speech than on the first day of the trial. It was stated that Hus had in his sermons in the Bethlehem chapel repeated Wycliffe's teaching on the question of transubstantiation.[1] Cardinal D'Ailly, who presided, believed that it would be easy for him, who was famed as one of the most brilliant dialectitians of his day, to confound Hus, of whose intellectual powers he appears to have had a mean opinion. To him—and the opinion has been revived by some modern writers—Hus appeared as a man of little education, who only copied and repeated Wycliffe's views. As already mentioned, recent research has proved that Hus was a man of learning, not unversed in scholastic controversy. He certainly proved it on this occasion. When Hus stated that he believed in transubstantiation, D'Ailly asked him in the terminology of scholasticism whether he believed in "universals" (*universalia a parte rei*). Hus affirmed that he did so, and the cardinal now wished to force him to draw the consequence that if "universals" were admitted the transformation of the substance of the consecrated bread (*transubstantiatio*) could not be maintained; for if Hus taught the doctrine of transubstantiation, he would have to admit that together with the cessation of the individuality (*singulare*) of the consecrated bread, its *universale* also ended. Hus, with great perspicacity, refuted the insidious arguments of D'Ailly, by stating that he considered transubstantiation as an exceptional case in which, together with the *singulare*, the *universale* also ceased to exist; in all other cases the

[1] Nothing is more complicated, and indeed contradictory, than Wycliffe's teaching with regard to transubstantiation and communion. The accusation was intentionally vague.

*singulare* continued to exist (*in aliis singularibus subjectatur*).[1] Hus's defence was undoubtedly successful, and he heartily expressed his joy in a letter written on that evening. His enemies, however, continued their attacks with undaunted energy. No matter appeared irrelevant which was likely to throw suspicion on Hus. His former English antagonist, John Stokes, again appeared on the scene. He stated that he had while at Prague read a treatise which was attributed to Hus and which contained many errors concerning the sacrament. Nothing was known of this treatise, nor indeed whether it existed. Hus was able firmly and truthfully to declare that he was not the author of this treatise. These attacks by means of vague accusations and insinuations would probably have continued, had not one of the English members of the council exclaimed: "Why are these irrelevant matters introduced, that do not concern the faith? He (Hus) thinks rightly concerning the sacrament of the altar, as we have heard."

The scholastic duel between Hus and Cardinal D'Ailly was the only occasion during the trial in which the conflict between nominalists and realists came to the fore. The absolute recklessness with which it was attempted to attribute to Hus ideas and statements which were quite alien to him prove the animosity of the nominalists against him. It was stated that Hus had said "that there were more than three persons in the trinity (*sic*) and that one of them was John Hus." One of the nominalist writers formally brought this accusation against Hus.[2] The nominalism of writers of this school led to practical, though prudently veiled, scepticism, which considered it possible to maintain every conceivable thesis with an appear-

[1] Mladenovic, pp. 276-285. See also Hus's letter written on June 7 (Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 106-108). Tschackert, *Peter von Ailly* (pp. 226-230) gives a short, very lucid account of the scholastic discussion between Hus and D'Ailly.

[2] "Hus concessit istam (thesin) quod Johannes Hus esset persona in divinis et quod plures essent personae in divinis quam tres." (*Mansi*, xxvii. p. 758.) This matter was formally brought before the council at its meeting on July 6.

ance of truth. As no accusations against Hus could be truthfully proved, D'Ailly, cleverly availing himself of the statements of the informers, Palec and Michael, attacked Hus with the sophistry of the nominalist school.

It is, however, easy to exaggerate the influence of the well-worn controversy between nominalists and realists on the fate of Hus. Hus used scholastic dialectics as a skilful fencer uses his sword, to parry the attacks of an implacable enemy. His heart was elsewhere, and this his enemies well knew. An opulent and immoral clergy and a vicious and ambitious emperor were equally determined to bring to the stake the humble priest who had dared to praise poverty, virtue, and self-sacrifice.

After this controversy the judges began to summon further witnesses. They were mainly Bohemians whom, as has already been mentioned, the Bishop of Litomysl and his allies had brought from their country to bear witness against Hus. Many had come to Constance unwillingly, probably on receipt of a considerable bribe, and hardly knew what they were expected to testify. The principal purpose of these depositions was to prove the entire dependence of Hus on Wycliffe. As the writings of the English divine had some time previously been declared to be heretical, the identification of Hus with Wycliffe necessarily involved the condemnation of Hus. The latter indeed endeavoured to define the difference between his own views and those of Wycliffe on several subjects, but was now again interrupted by loud cries. He was, however, able to declare in words that I have already quoted, that he did not wish to preach or follow the erroneous teaching of Wycliffe or of any one else, that Wycliffe was not his father or indeed a Bohemian, and that if he had disseminated errors, it was the duty of the English to see to this. When the article referring to Hus's appeal to Jesus Christ was read out, it was received by the assembly with loud laughter and derision. On the whole, eight articles were read out on this day. Many

contained distorted versions of remarks that Hus had made, often many years previously, when conversing with his friends at Prague. Words of praise of Wycliffe spoken by Hus were interpreted as implying his complete acceptation of all the tenets of the English divine. The trial or rather the reading out of the articles of accusation against Hus was then suspended, and it was decided that the proceedings should continue on the following day.

At the end of the sitting an incident occurred which proves both D'Ailly's great animosity against Hus, and the fear which he and the other opulent prelates entertained that Hus might yet escape unless it were possible to render him obnoxious to the temporal powers. Before the assembly separated, the Cardinal of Cambray made the following statement:[1] "When I was riding from Rome (to Constance), some prelates from Bohemia met me on the road, and when I asked them what news they had they answered: 'Most reverend father, we bring evil news; all the clergy is being despoiled of its prebends and possessions.'" Then, addressing Hus, the Cardinal of Cambray continued: "Magister John, when thou wert brought into the palace (of the bishop) and we asked thee how thou hadst come here, thou didst say that thou hadst come here of thy free will and that if thou hadst not wished to come, neither the King of Bohemia, nor the lord King of the Romans could have forced thee to come." The master answered: "Yes, I said that I had come here of my free will, and that if I had not wished to come, there were so many and so great lords in the kingdom of Bohemia, who love me and to whose castles I could have retired concealing myself there, that neither that king nor this one could have forced me to come." The cardinal shook his head, and, his face somewhat altered by indignation, said: "See, what audacity." Then while the others murmured, Lord John of Chlum said: "He speaks the truth; what he says is true. I am but a poor knight in our kingdom,

[1] Mladenovic, *Relatio de M. J. Hus causa.*

but I would keep him for a year, so that he could not be seized. Also are there many and great lords who love him, and who have strongholds in which they could protect him against both kings." It is needless to point out that these remarks both on the part of Hus and of Lord John were most injudicious. They had said exactly what the astute cardinal had wished them to say. Sigismund, whose vanity was inordinate, wished to appear at Constance as an absolute emperor, and nothing could wound him more severely than this revelation of the weakness of the Luxemburg dynasty in Bohemia. Though D'Ailly was perhaps not aware of this, Sigismund was from the first determined to silence Hus permanently. His bitterness against the Bohemian church-reformer, however, no doubt now became greater. His parting words to Hus on leaving the refectory were therefore most ungracious. He strongly advised Hus to recant, declaring that he would grant no protection to a heretic; rather would he be the one to fire the stake to burn such an offender.

The third day of the trial, *ultima audientia dicta, veriusque derisio*,[1] as Mladenovic writes, was the eighth of June. An enormous mass of evidence against Hus had been collected by Michael de causis and Stephen Palec, and a huge number of articles had to be read out. Twenty-six articles extracted from Hus's treatise *De Ecclesia* were first read to the assembly. They had previously been shown to Hus, and his replies had also been noted down. It was not difficult for the accusers to prove that Hus had spoken and written strongly against the administration and organisation of the Roman Church—such as they were in his day. This evil administration he had declared to be responsible for the terrible prevalence of simony and immorality among the clergy—a fact which even the most ardent opponent of church-reform could not deny. It was less easy to convict Hus of heretical statements with regard to

[1] Mr. Wratislaw has well translated this by "the last so-called hearing, or rather jeering."

matters of dogma, though the accusers were by no means scrupulous in their system of attack. Many statements contained in Hus's book had been altered and distorted to make them appear more invidious.[1] The one point with regard to which the accusers of Hus had some foundation for their statement, that his teaching differed from that of the Roman Church, was the difficult and obscure question of predestination. Hus, indeed, maintained that his opinions were in accordance with those of St. Augustine, but the school of theologians which exercised most influence at the council was secretly, though not openly, antagonistic to many views of that saint. In Article 19 it was stated that Hus had said that "the nobles of the world should compel the priesthood to observe Christ's law." This was on the whole in accordance with Hus's views, but he pointed out that he had stated that the church militant consisted of the priests, who should preserve the law purely, the nobles of the world, who should compel them to observe Christ's regulations, and the vulgar, who must, according to Christ's law, serve the other ranks. It did not escape D'Ailly, the most acute as well as the most learned of Hus's antagonists, that these views were likely to gain for Hus numerous adherents among the sovereigns and nobles, many of whom disapproved of the extreme opulence and power of the priesthood. D'Ailly determined again to denounce Hus as an enemy of the temporal authorities and, as will be seen almost immediately, succeeded in doing so. Article 21 again referred to Hus's appeal to Christ, a matter that evidently rankled in the minds of his opponents. The mention was again received with cries of derision.

[1] It would lead too far to go into this matter. It may, however, to give but one example, be mentioned that Article 16 accused Hus of having declared that "Papa non quia Petri vicem tenet, sed quia magnam habet dotationem, ex eo est sanctissimus." Hus's reply ran thus: "Verba mea hic mutilita sunt et corrupta. Sic enim scripsi: Non enim quia vices tenet Petri et quia habet magnam dotationem ex eo est sanctissimus, sed si Christum sequitur in humilitate, mansuetudine, patientia, labore et magno charitatis vinculo, tunc est sanctus." (*Von der Hardt*, T. iv. p. 317.)

When the reading of the first series of articles had ended, the Cardinal of Cambray remarked that yet more heretical statements could have been found in the treatise *De Ecclesia*. The next articles, seven in number, referred to statements contained in Hus's treatise entitled *Responsio ad scripta Mag. Stephani Palec*. The extracts, made, no doubt, by Palec himself, were in many cases falsified and distorted. Mladenovic, indeed, heads his account of these articles by the words: "Articles extracted from the treatise against Master Stephen Palec (but rarely faithfully)."[1] The accusations are very similar to the preceding ones, and indeed to all the accusations made against Hus at the council. It was repeated that he had attacked the authority of the pope and the church, that he had taught the doctrine of predestination, and that he had stated that unworthy priests could not validly administer the sacrament. As regards the last-named point, it is sufficient to state that Hus had frequently, both by word and in writing, expressed the contrary view. The first of these articles gave rise to a somewhat prolonged discussion. The article accused Hus of having stated that "if the pope, a bishop, or a prelate was in the state of mortal sin, he was not pope, bishop, or prelate." Hus's answer was certainly imprudent and devoid of worldly wisdom. He said: "Yes, and he who is in the state of mortal sin cannot either rightly be a king before God, as is shown by the Book of Kings, chap. iv. *v.* 16, where God, through Samuel, said to Saul: 'As thou hast rejected my word, I reject thee from being king.'"[2] This statement did not remain unnoticed by the enemies of Hus. Von der Hardt and Mladenovic give almost identical accounts of the discussion that now ensued. Sigismund was looking out of a window of the refectory, having as his companions the Count Palatine

[1] "Articuli extracti ex tractatu facto contra M. Stephanum Palec (sed rarus (sic) vere)."

[2] The passage referred to, though not quoted verbally by Hus, is really in the book of 1 Samuel, chap. xiv. *v.* 26. Hus was not allowed the use of a Bible in prison, and though he was exceptionally well-read in Scripture, we sometimes meet with little mistakes.

and the Burgrave of Nuremberg. They talked much of John Hus, and the king finally said that there never was a more pernicious heretic. But when the prelates heard the words which Hus had spoken they all exclaimed, " Call the king "; but the king, who was talking about Hus near the window, did not hear them. Then those who presided called to the men who were nearer the king saying, " Bring him (the king) here that he may hear what concerns him. Then when the emperor [1] had been called, John was ordered to repeat what he had said about unworthy kings. When he had done so the emperor said, " John Hus, no one lives without sinning." Then the Cardinal of Cambray, greatly irritated, said: " Is it then not enough that, despising the ecclesiastical state, thou endeavourest to degrade it by thy writings and thy tenets? Now thou attemptest also to eject the kings from their state! " Palec then began to quote some laws by means of which he wished to prove that Saul was a king even after he had heard these words of Samuel, and that David had therefore forbidden that he should be slain, not because of holiness of life, which he possessed not, but because of the sanctity of his anointment. Then when Hus quoted the words of St. Cyprian, who said: " Vainly does he claim to belong to Christianity who nowise imitates Christ in his conduct," Palec answered: " See what foolishness! in what way is it to the purpose to allege that because a man is not a true Christian he is therefore not a true pope, or bishop, or king? For the learned know that (the words) pope, bishop, king, signify an office, but Christian a merit. Thus it is clear that a man may be a true pope, bishop, or king though he is not a true Christian." The seventh article accused Hus of having stated that the condemnation of articles derived from Wycliffe's writings had been irrational and unjust. Cardinal D'Ailly said: " John Hus, you said that you would not defend any error of Wycliffe.

[1] The contemporary writers on the Council of Constance call Sigismund indiscriminately emperor, king, King of the Romans, King of Hungary.

Yet it appears from your writings that you have publicly defended his articles." Hus answered: "I say the same thing which I said before; that I do not wish to defend the errors of Wycliffe, or of any one else. But it appeared to me contrary to my conscience simply to approve of the condemnation of the articles while no exposition of the arguments of the other side had taken place. Therefore did I not approve of the condemnation of the articles." It deserves notice that on this important question, which was frequently raised before and during the trial, Hus remained perfectly consistent, and indeed expressed his point of view almost in the same words.

Finally, six articles extracted from Hus's work, *Responsio ad Scripta M. Stanislai de Znoymo*, were read out. They covered the same ground as the former accusations. It was only at the sitting of the council on the day of the execution of Hus that the accusation of having declared that he was a fourth person of the divinity was formally raised against him. The members of the council, who knew that Hus's condemnation was a foregone conclusion, listened to the lengthy proceedings with increasing impatience. Laughter and derisive remarks on Hus became more and more frequent.[1]

When all the articles containing the accusations against Hus had been read out, Cardinal D'Ailly said, addressing Hus: "Thou hast heard how great is the heinousness of the accusations that have been brought against thee. It is thy duty to reflect now on what thou wilt do." The cardinal then pointed out that two ways were open to him. He must submit himself humbly to the judgment and sentence of the council, which, in consideration of Sigismund and his brother the King of Bohemia, would treat him leniently. This no doubt referred to the plan of confining Hus for life in a distant monastery. Should he, however, not consent to this submission,

[1] In Von der Hardt's full account of the proceedings we meet constantly —particularly towards the end—with notes such as: "Et cum hoc diceret, deridebatur," "Hic dixerunt"—the members of the council—"Ecce jam prophetizat," etc.

and still wish to defend some of his tenets, then a hearing would not be refused to him, but he would act thus at his greatest peril. Hus replied: "I do not wish to maintain any errors, but will humbly submit to the decrees of the council; but I cannot, not to offend God and my conscience, say that I held erroneous opinions, which I never held, and which I never had at heart. I beg only that hearing may be granted me that I may express my views regarding the accusations that have been made against me." Hus then enumerated several important points on which he had either not been allowed to speak at all, or had been interrupted when attempting to do so. We here again meet with the same contradictory views concerning the purpose of the council that are evident from the time of Hus's arrival at Constance to the moment of his death. Hus believed that he would be allowed freely to expound and defend his opinions, while the members of the council considered that he had been summoned to Constance to recant whatever heretical views had been rightly or wrongly ascribed to him, and then to submit to whatever punishment should be awarded to him. Hus's reply, which did not express immediate and unconditional surrender, was received with general indignation, and loud cries summoned him to submit. D'Ailly, and afterwards the Cardinal of Florence (Zabarella), continued to reason with Hus, urging him to follow the advice of the council. Sigismund also strongly advised him to recant heretical views, even if he had never held them. This, of course, appeared the greatest of sins to a pious and straightforward priest, such as was Hus. He who firmly believed that nothing he had said or written was contrary to God's word could never consent to appear as a professed heretic to his countrymen, who had so warmly welcomed his teaching. Hus's answer to Sigismund was almost identical with that which he had given to the Cardinal of Cambray. The indignation of the members of the council became yet greater. "An old bald-headed bishop from

Poland "[1] declared that canon law precisely indicated the treatment that should be meted out to heretics, and a "fat priest sitting at the window in precious robes, who appeared to be a Prussian,"[2] exclaimed with a loud voice: "Let him not be allowed to recant, for even if he recants, he will not keep to it."[3] Hus, however, did not recant, nor was it in consideration of his reiterated and consistent statements possible for him to do so. Palec, wishing to envenom the already prevalent animosity against Hus, now began to animadvert on his attitude on the occasion of the execution of the three young men who had taken part in the demonstrations against the misuse of indulgences.[4] No promise was made to Hus assuring him that he would be allowed freely to expound his views, and he was reconducted to prison by the Bishop of Riga, in whose custody he had been ever since his return from Gottlieben to Constance. On leaving the hall Hus met John of Chlum, one of the Bohemian noblemen who were then at Constance. Chlum gave him his hand and endeavoured to comfort him. Hus, as Mladenovic tells us, was deeply touched that he did not disdain to salute him who was rejected by almost all and spurned as a heretic, and to give him his hand.

At the end of the sitting an incident occurred that deserves to be told in the words of Mladenovic, who was present. He writes: "After his (Hus's) departure, all who were present, prelates and cardinals, wished to leave and had already risen. Then the soldiers who were on guard in the background also retired, and our men (*i.e.*, the friends of Hus) went near the window, and Lord John of Chlum, Lord Venceslas of Lestna and P.[5] the bachelor of arts, still remained within. These men the king, it appears, did not notice, but thought that

[1] Mladenovic. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] This refers to the untruthful accusation already mentioned, according to which Hus had written that should he recant at Constance, his recantation was to be considered as obtained by force, and therefore invalid.

[4] See p. 157.

[5] *i.e.*, Peter of Mladenovic, the writer.

they had retired when the master was conducted back to prison. Then the king said: 'Reverend fathers, you have already heard the many things that are in his (Hus's) books, those which he has confessed, those which have been sufficiently proved against him; each single one of those would be sufficient to condemn him. Therefore, if he will not recant these errors, and abjure them and declare himself opposed to them, let him be burnt, or you will yourselves deal with him according to your (canon) law, as you know. And be it known to you that even if he promises to recant, and even if he does so, you must not believe him, neither will I, for if he returned to the kingdom (of Bohemia) and to his furtherers, he would spread these and other errors, and a new heresy would arise, worse than the former one. You must therefore entirely forbid him to preach, and prevent his returning to his friends, that he may not spread any further heresies. And his articles that have been condemned here, you must send to my brother in the Bohemian land, and—oh, the sorrow!—also to Poland, and other lands where he has secret disciples, and many furtherers; and wheresoever men are found who hold such views, let the bishops and prelates punish them, that the branches be torn out together with the root; and let the council write to the kings and princes begging them to favour among their prelates most those who have at this holy council worked most strenuously at the destruction of heresy. Know also that it is written that every word (sentence) depends on two or three witnesses, but here the hundredth part would suffice to condemn him. And you must also quickly make an end of his secret friends and furtherers, for I shall be leaving shortly, and specially (must you make an end of) this one, this one,'[1] then resuming his speech, 'this one who is detained here.' They then said, 'Jerome.' And he: 'Yes, Jerome.' 'We shall make an end with this man in less than

[1] Mladenovic represents Sigismund as hesitating in his speech—perhaps not remembering the name of Jerome.

a day (the prelates said); it will be easier, for this one,' alluding to Hus, 'is the master, and this Jerome is his disciple.' Then again the king (said): 'Assuredly, I was still young when this sect arose and began in Bohemia; and behold how greatly it has grown and multiplied since!'[1] After these words they all joyfully left the refectory."

No conjectures, however sagacious, concerning Sigismund's intentions with regard to Hus can show them more clearly than Sigismund's own words do here. As Dr. Flajshans very truly writes: "These few words, spoken in an unguarded moment, cost Sigismund the Bohemian crown."

After the ending of the third day of Hus's trial, it was obvious to all that his condemnation and execution would take place in a few days. No one was so thoroughly aware of this as Hus himself, and his parting letters to his friends, which will be mentioned presently, are among the most precious of those that have been preserved.

If some delay yet occurred before his execution, it was because some still hoped that it might be possible to induce Hus to recant. His French enemies indeed, such as Gerson and D'Ailly, probably preferred that the Bohemian church-reformer should be publicly burnt at the stake, but Sigismund, who kept his own intentions on the Bohemian throne in view, hesitated. Strong remonstrances, couched in ever more energetic language—of which I have here only been able to mention a few—continued to reach him from Bohemia and Moravia. Though he may still have thought that the death or disappearance of Hus would break the strength of the Hussite movement, he necessarily perceived that the public martyrdom of the hero of the nation might very possibly cause a revolutionary outbreak. It was, on the other hand, certain that, should Hus recant in any form, he would entirely lose his prestige with the Bohemian people. If after such a

[1] These words refer to the movement in favour of church-reform that arose in Bohemia. Some writers incorrectly see in them an allusion to Wycliffe and the Lollard troubles in England.

recantation Hus were quietly removed to a secluded monastery in distant Sweden, Sigismund's plans on Bohemia would be greatly furthered. The council so deeply indebted to him would be quite willing to bring against King Venceslas and Queen Sophia the accusations of heresy that were already being prepared.

It would not, however, be fair to suggest that all the members of the council were devoid of pity for the pious and God-loving Bohemian priest. Among those who secretly felt sympathy for Hus was a prominent prelate whose name is not known to us. Von der Hardt's statement,[1] that Hus's secret friend was John of Brogni, cardinal-bishop of Ostia, is almost certainly incorrect. This prelate, whom Hus merely describes as "*pater*," entered into correspondence with him. The kind-hearted priest strongly endeavoured to persuade Hus to renounce the opinions which had been condemned—not only those he had actually expressed, but also those that had been wrongly ascribed to him. Among other arguments, the "father" impressed on Hus that it was not he personally, but his superiors and the entire council which would bear the responsibility should he abandon the opinions which he had formerly held.[2] As Dr. Lechler has well pointed out, the question whether Hus should yield to the authority of others, or rely on his own conscience, was the all-important one. "Hus had," Dr. Lechler[3] writes, "either to subject his own conscience to that of others, to that of very weighty men certainly as they included the members of a great council of the church, or to follow resolutely and fearlessly the dictates

[1] The form of recantation submitted to Hus is thus described: "Revocationis forma a Johanne Ostiensi, cardinali Vivariensi vice-cancellario Husso proposita." (Von der Hardt, iv. 329.)

[2] "Non moveat vos istud, quod condemnetis veritates quia non vos, sed ipsi damnant, qui sunt majores vestri, et etiam nostri de praesenti. Attendite hoc verbum: ne innitaris prudentiae tuae; multi scientifici et conscienciosi viri sunt in concilio; fili mi audi legem motris," ("Pater," M. Joanni Hus, Palacky, *Documenta*).

[3] Dr. Lechler, *Johann von Wiclif*, vol. ii. p. 217. Dr. Lechler writes from the point of view of a Protestant divine.

of his own conscience. The same question confronted him which afterwards confronted Luther when he appeared before Cajetan, at Augsburg, and again when he appeared before the emperor and the imperial diet. The same question again arose before the Protestant estates of Germany, when they appeared at Spires in 1529, and more recently before the bishops, priests, and members of the Roman Church, when the dogma of the infallible ministry of the pope was introduced. Herein," Dr. Lechler continues, " lies the greatness of Hus, that, in spite of his humility and childlike nature, in spite of his great self-distrust, he did not allow himself to be intimidated by the unanimous opinion of a great council representing so large a part of the learning, intellectual power, and ecclesiastical authority of the time, that he preferred to bear the shame of being considered an obstinate heretic, and even to suffer the pangs of death at the stake, rather than consent to a recantation which he knew to be a falsehood."

Hus therefore declined, though in a courteous and grateful fashion, the suggestions of the kind " father." His letters in these, the last weeks of his life, are numerous and very precious. Now certain that his end is very near, he takes leave of his friends and gives his last advice and consolation to his disciples.[1] These letters clearly portray his thoughts and feelings in the time that immediately preceded his martyrdom. It is therefore of interest to transcribe some parts of these letters. In one of the earliest of these letters addressed " to his Bohemian friends," Hus refers somewhat bitterly to the conduct of Sigismund. The letter is therefore important, as Sigismund's part in the condemnation of Hus has often been misrepresented and misunderstood. Hus writes: " As regards Peter,[2] I am pleased. I do not keep his letters, but

[1] These letters, written some in Bohemian, some in Latin, have been frequently translated into English, the Bohemian ones from German or Latin translations. I have previously translated fragments of them in my *Bohemia, a Historical Sketch*, and *A History of Bohemian Literature*.

[2] *i.e.*, Mladenovic.

destroy them. Do not let them send me sheets containing six pages of paper,[1] for I fear they may cause trouble to the messenger and others. I also pray in the name of God that all the lords should entreat the king to allow me to be heard once more, that I may answer the accusations, as indeed the king promised at the last meeting of the council. It will be greatly to his shame if he overlooks this promise. But I presume that his word is as trustworthy as it was with regard to the safe-conduct, and in Bohemia they already told me to beware of his safe-conduct. Others said: 'He himself will deliver you into the hands of his enemies.' Lord Mikes Divoky[2] said to me in the presence of Magister Jesenic: 'Magister, know for certain that you will be condemned.' He, I think, knew the king's intentions. I thought that the king (Sigismund) understood God's law and the truth, but I find he understands them very little. He condemned me before my enemies did. Had he but followed the example of the heathen Pilate, who, having heard the accusations, said: 'I have found no fault in this man,' or had he but said: 'Behold, I have given this man a safe-conduct. If he will not submit to the decision of the council, I will send him back to the King of Bohemia with your (the council's) decision and evidence, that he (the King of Bohemia) and his clergy may pronounce judgment on him;' for he (Sigismund) let me know through Henry Lefl and others that he would grant me sufficient hearing, and, if I did not submit to the sentence, send me safely back."

On June 10—two days after the second hearing—Hus wrote the letter which of all his letters has obtained, and rightly obtained, the greatest fame.[3] It is addressed "To the

[1] In Latin, *sextemi*. The sending of large sheets of paper probably aroused the suspicions of the gaolers and spies.

[2] Lords Mikes of Divoky and Henry Lefl, mentioned later in this letter, were courtiers of King Sigismund.

[3] It has been frequently translated, though generally not from the Bohemian original. I translated—of course from the original—portions of this letter in my *Bohemia, a Historical Sketch*, and *History of Bohemian Literature*. I here give the letter in its entirety.

Whole Bohemian Nation."[1] Hus writes: "Master John Hus, in good hope a servant of God, hopes that the Lord God will grant to all true Bohemians who love and will love the Lord God, to live and die in His grace, and to reside for ever in celestial joy. Amen.

"Faithful in God, men and women, rich and poor! I beg and entreat you to love the Lord God, praise His word, gladly hear it and live according to it. Cling, I beg you, to the divine truth, which I have preached to you according to God's law. I also beg that if any one has heard either in my sermons, or privately, anything contrary to God's truth, or if I have written anything such—which I trust to God is not the case—he should not retain it. I further beg also that if any one has seen levity in me in word or deed, he should not retain (remember) it; but let him pray to God for me that God may forgive. I beg you to love, praise, and honour those priests who lead a moral life, those in particular who work for the word of God. I beg you to beware of crafty people, particularly of unworthy priests of whom our Saviour has said that they are clothed like sheep, but are inwardly greedy wolves. I beg the nobles to treat the poor people kindly and rule them justly. I beg the burghers to conduct their business honestly. I beg the artisans to perform their duties conscientiously and joyfully. I beg the servants to serve their masters and mistresses faithfully. I beg the teachers to live honestly, to instruct their pupils carefully, to love God above all; for the sake of His glory and the good of the community, not from avarice and worldly ambition should they teach. I beg the students and other scholars to obey and follow their masters in everything that is good, and to study for the (sake of the) praise of God, for their own salvation, and that of others. I beg all to thank Lord Venceslas of Duba, otherwise of Lestna, Lord John of Chlum, Lord Henry of Plumlov, Lord William Zajic, Lord Myska,

[1] "Veskeremu Narodu Ceskemu."

and the other nobles of Bohemia and Moravia, as well as the faithful lords of the Polish kingdom, and to gratefully remember their zeal; for as brave defenders of God and upholders of the truth they often withstood the whole council, speaking and replying in favour of my liberation; render thanks particularly to Lord Venceslas of Duba and to the Lord of Chlum, and believe what they will tell you;[1] for they were present at the council on several days when I defended myself. These men know which Bohemians[2] falsely accused me of many infamous deeds, how the whole council railed against me, and how I answered the questions that were addressed to me. I beg you also to pray for his Majesty the Roman and Bohemian king,[3] and for his queen, and for the lords, that our beloved God may abide with them in His grace now, and afterwards guide them to eternal bliss.

"I write this letter to you in prison and in fetters, expecting to-morrow the sentence of death, full of hope in God, resolved not to recede from the divine truth, nor to recant the errors which false witnesses have invented and attributed to me. How God has acted towards me, how he has been with me during all my troubles—that you will only know when by the grace of God we shall meet again in heaven. Of Master Jerome, my beloved comrade, I hear nothing except that he is in prison, as I am, expecting death and that because of his faith, which he bravely expounded to the Bohemians. It was those Bohemians who are our bitterest enemies who delivered us up for imprisonment to our other enemies. I beg you to pray to God for these men. I also beg you all, but especially the Praguers, to befriend the Bethlehem chapel, as long as God permits that the divine word be preached there. The devil has been greatly incensed against this spot, and has incited

[1] *i.e.*, on their return to Bohemia after Hus's death.
[2] The Bishop of Litomysl and his agents.
[3] King Venceslas, who to the end of his life claimed to be King of the Romans as well as King of Bohemia.

against it the parish priests and canons, knowing that his (the devil's) kingdom is disturbed by the preaching at that spot. I hope that God will deign to preserve the chapel, and that others will preach and will obtain there greater success than was possible to an imperfect man such as I am. I also beg you to love each other, not to allow good men to be oppressed, and to grant to all that which is due to them. Written on Monday, the night before the feast of St. Vitus, after the feast of the good angels " (June 10).

Several of the letters of Hus, which follow this one in chronological order, refer to events in Bohemia which occurred after the master's departure, and which have already been mentioned here.[1] The council, the majority of whose members were Italians, does not appear to have had much knowledge of the state of affairs in Bohemia; but since the deposition of Pope John, Sigismund had entirely assumed the direction of the assembly. Never deficient in vanity and presumption, he claimed to act fully as representative of the papacy up to the time that a new pontiff should have been elected.[2] It was undoubtedly through his influence that the question of communion in the two kinds in Bohemia was brought before the council and there fully discussed. The theologians who were consulted, though not denying that communion in the two kinds had been instituted by Jesus Christ, condemned its revival by Jacobellus in Bohemia.[3] The matter was finally settled at a meeting of the council on June 15. A statement was read out by the Archbishop of Milan declaring that, " Though Christ had at the Last Supper administered the venerated sacrament of communion in the two species of

[1] See p. 232.

[2] It is beyond the purpose of this book to examine whether Sigismund appointed bishops in Germany during the vacancy of the papal see; that he claimed the right to do so is certain.

[3] " Hi (theologi) ergo post multos congressus et frequentes deliberationes teste Gersone tandem sex conclusionibus formatis recente a Jacobello inter Bohemos resuscitatum Eucharistiae usum condemnarunt." (Von der Hardt, T. iv. p. 331.)

bread and wine, yet nevertheless the laudable authority of the holy canons and the approved custom of the church have established that communion should be administered only to those who are fasting. Similarly, though in the primitive church, the faithful received communion in the two kinds, yet it was afterwards decreed that priests only should receive communion in the two kinds, and the laymen in the species of bread only. As therefore this custom was wisely introduced by the church and the holy fathers, and has long been observed, it is to be considered as a law, which cannot be contested or changed except by the authority of the church. Therefore no priest shall, under penalty of excommunication, administer communion to the people in the two kinds. Those who have committed this offence shall, if they do penitence, be re-admitted into the bosom of the church. Those who harden their hearts and refuse to do penance shall be considered as heretics, and the aid of the secular arm shall be demanded for their punishment." [1]

The historical importance of this decree cannot be overrated. Communion in the two kinds became the watchword of the Hussite Bohemian Church up to its extinction in 1620. In the place of a battle-flag the Bohemian priests carried a monstrance containing the sacrament—which it became customary to call the " ark "—before the troops when they engaged in battle.[2]

[1] Abridged from Von der Hardt, T. iv. p. 334.

[2] The fact that communion in the two kinds, " utraquism," as it was called, acquired so great an importance among the Hussites, induced the Bohemians to endeavour to connect Hus himself as closely as possible with its introduction. They would certainly have proved their case, could we believe in the authenticity of a letter which is included in most collections of the letters of Hus. In this letter Hus writes: " Exhort all to profess their faith and to receive communion in the two kinds, that is the body and blood of Christ." The letter, which is undated and addressed, " Sacerdoti cuidam," is printed by Palacky also, but he strongly doubted its genuineness and believed that it was of later origin and belonged to the time when the Bohemians wished to prove that their great leader and martyr was entirely the originator of the doctrine on which they laid most stress. The letter is not found among the early MSS. of Hus but is included in the Nuremberg edition of his works. It is also possible that the letter is partly genuine and that the passage

The administration of communion in the two kinds was only introduced by Master Jacobellus of Stribro[1] after Hus had left Prague, and he does not appear at first to have given much attention to the matter. In the first letter, addressed to the "Friends at Constance" (it is undated, but belongs probably to the beginning of the year 1415), in which Hus refers to this subject, he expresses no positive opinion, but writes that Scripture and the custom of the primitive church appear favourable to utraquism. After the Roman Church had by the decree of June 15 established a new dogma with regard to a matter on which freedom of opinion had previously existed, Hus expressed himself more positively. On June 21 he addressed a letter on this subject to Gallus (in Bohemian, Havlik), preacher at the Bethlehem chapel. Havlik was one of those priests who opposed Jacobellus when he first established utraquism. Hus writes: "Beloved brother Gallus, preacher of the word of Christ! Do not oppose the sacrament of the chalice of the Lord which Christ established through Himself and through His apostle; for no word of Scripture is opposed to it, only custom which, I ween, sprang from negligence; for we must not follow custom, but Christ's example and the truth. Already has the council, alleging custom, condemned the use of the chalice at the communion of laymen as a heresy, and he who practises it is to be punished as a heretic unless he comes to his right mind (conforms to the decree of the council). What wickedness! Behold, they condemn Christ's enactment as heresy! I therefore beg thee in the name of God no longer to oppose Jacobellus, lest dissension arise among the faithful—a thing over which the devil would rejoice. Be then, dearest, prepared to suffer when administering communion in the two kinds. Cling bravely to

advocating utraquism was added later. Mr. Mares in his work, *Listy Husovy* (Letters of Hus), includes the letter and believes it to be a work of Hus. On the whole it is probable that the theory according to which Jacobellus was the originator of utraquism is the correct one.

[1] In German, Miess; that town being little known, German writers have often called Jacobellus "of Meissen."

Christ's truth, reject unworthy fears, confirm the other brethren in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The arguments in favour of communion with the chalice thou wilt find in what I have written in Constance. Greet the faithful in Christ."

Several of Hus's last Bohemian letters addressed "to the faithful Bohemians" (*vernym Cechum*) are of the highest interest. Following on the condemnation of utraquism decreed by the council on June 15, that assembly had on June 23 decreed that all Hus's writings should be burnt. This included Hus's works written in his own language, which most of the members of the council were unable to understand. The informer Palec may have acted as translator, but it is more probable that he only submitted to the council extracts selected by him which afforded a sufficient pretext for the destruction of the books. Hus refers to this matter in several letters; in one dated June 24, and probably intended to be read to the congregation at Bethlehem, he writes: "Beloved, I exhort you not to tremble or to be struck down by fear because they have condemned my books to be burnt. Remember that they burnt the prophecies of Jeremiah, which God had ordered him to write; yet did they not escape that which he had prophesied; for after they had been burnt God commanded that they (the prophecies) should again be written down and more words added. This was done. He (Jeremiah), being in prison, dictated, and the saintly Baruch, his secretary, wrote down his words; as is written in Jeremiah, chapter xxxv. or lv.[1] Similarly is it written in the books of the Machabees that the law of God was burnt and that they tortured those who possessed it. Then in the time of the New Testament they burnt the holy men, together with the books of God's law. Thus the cardinals condemned the books of

[1] As was already remarked by Mladenovic in a MS. note, the passage referred to by Hus is in Jeremiah, chap. xxxvi. Hus was not allowed a Bible in prison.

St. Gregory, which are named *Moralia*,[1] and they would have burnt them all, had not God, through his (Gregory's) one disciple, Peter, saved them. Also St. John Chrysostomus was condemned as a heretic by two councils of priests, but the gracious Lord God, after the death of St. John, revealed their falsehood. Having these things before your eyes, let not fear prevent you from reading my books, nor induce you to give them up to be burnt. Remember what our gracious Saviour said as a warning (Matthew, chapter xxiv.), that before the day of judgment there will be great tribulation such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, so that, were it possible, even the elect would be lead into error, but because of the elect these days will be shortened.[2] Bearing this in your minds, dearest, persevere bravely, for I hope to God that the following[3] of Antichrist will fear you and leave you in peace, and that the Council of Constance will not come to Bohemia; for I believe that many who are at this council will die before they have extorted these books from you; many members of this council also will disperse like storks throughout the lands, and only when winter comes will they know what evil deeds they did in summer. Consider that they (the members of the council) branded their chief as a heretic. Answer now, ye preachers who preach that the pope is an earthly God, that he cannot sin, that he cannot commit simony, that, as the jurists[4] affirm, the pope is the head of the entire holy church, which he rules very wisely, that he is the heart of the holy church, which he spiritually nourishes, the fountain from which all power and goodness flow, the sun of the holy church and the faultless refuge to which all Christians should fly. But now, behold, this head has been struck off.

[1] The book referred to is the *Exposition of St. Job or Moralia*, by Pope Gregory I., surnamed the "Great" (590-604).

[2] Here also Hus is obviously quoting from memory.

[3] In Bohemian, *skola*=school.

[4] *i.e.*, those priests, very numerous in the time of Hus, who studied jurisprudence rather than theology.

The earthly God is in bonds, and he is openly convicted of sin, the fountain has become dry, the sun has become dim, the heart has been plucked out, the refuge has fled from Constance and has been abandoned, so that none can flee to it. The council has condemned him (Pope John XXIII.) as a heretic because he sold indulgences and bishoprics, and other benefices, and among those who condemned him were many who had themselves bought such things from him, and others who had trafficked in them. Thus John, Bishop of Litomysl, was present, who twice bid for the archbishopric of Prague, but others outbid him. Oh, why did they not first remove the beam from their own eye? Truly their (canon) law says: 'If one has obtained some dignity by means of money, let him be deprived of it.' Therefore should the seller and buyer, and he who deposits money,[1] or acts as agent, be publicly condemned. St. Peter condemned and accursed Simon because he wished to buy for money the power of the Holy Ghost. These (the members of the council) condemn indeed and curse the vendors, but they themselves continue buyers and givers of earnest-money. There is a bishop at Constance who bought (benefices) and another who sold, and the pope received money for giving his consent. It is thus also in Bohemia (and Moravia),[2] as is known to you. Oh, had but the Lord Jesus said at the council: 'He among you that is without the sin of simony, let him condemn Pope John!' It seems to me that they would have run away, one after the other. Why then did they kneel before him, kiss his feet, call him holiest father, knowing that he was a heretic, a murderer, one guilty of nameless sin—of all of which offences he was convicted? Why did the cardinals choose him as pope, knowing that he was an evil murderer, one who had killed the holy father?[3] Why did

[1] Earnest-money, that was paid down before the sale of a benefice was completed.

[2] The brackets are in the original.

[3] Hus refers to the widely-spread rumour that John XXIII. had poisoned Pope Alexander.

they allow him to commit simony when he had become pope —they who had been appointed his counsellors, that they should counsel him wisely? And are not those guilty who together with him committed simony? Why then, till he (Pope John XXIII.) fled from Constance, did none dare say anything to him but 'holiest father?' Then indeed they were still afraid of him. But when the secular power with the consent or by the will of God seized him, then they conspired against him, concerting among themselves to prevent his being freed. Assuredly the wickedness, sinfulness, and shame of Antichrist became manifest in this pope and in the other members of the council. Already may God's faithful servants understand the words of the Saviour when he said: 'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet (whoso readeth let him understand).'[1] The great abomination is pride, avarice, simony. By desolation are meant honours that are devoid of modesty and other virtues, as we see plainly when looking at those who hold offices and honours. Oh, could I but describe these sins that the faithful may shun them. Gladly would I do so, but I hope to God that he will grant after me men who are braver than those of the present day, who will show better the wickedness of Antichrist,[2] and lay down their lives for the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will, I pray, grant you and me eternal happiness. Amen. Written on the day of St. John the Baptist in prison, and in fetters, mindful that John also was in prison and in fetters and was decapitated for God's truth."

A letter of Hus written two days later, also addressed to "the faithful Bohemians," again refers to the decree ordering the burning of his Bohemian writings. The letter also contains an allusion to the terrible state of depravation prevailing

[1] St. Matthew xxiv. 15.

[2] This passage is one of those in which Hus speaks prophetically of those who were to continue his struggle for church-reform. These remarks are probably the foundation of the legend—to be noted later—according to which Hus had predicted the coming of Luther.

in Constance in consequence of the presence of so many ecclesiastics. Such matters have often been overlooked by writers of all parties. Yet they deserve attention. It was the burning indignation kindled in the minds of clean-living and respectable men by such scandals that produced the movement in favour of church-reform far more than any differences of opinion on matters of dogma. In this letter (June 26), which need not be translated entirely, Hus writes: "It has occurred to me to inform you how the council, haughty, avaricious and full of all iniquity, has condemned my Bohemian books, which it had neither heard nor seen, nor, had it heard them, would have understood; for there were at the council Italians, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Spaniards and Germans, and men of other nations. The only ones who would have understood them were John, Bishop of Litomysl and the other Bohemian instigators, with the chapters of Prague and the Vysehrad,[1] who originated the insults to God's truth and to our Bohemian home,[2] which (country) I, trusting in God, hold to be the most pious land, zealous for the divine word and for morality. Oh, had you but seen this council, which calls itself the most holy council and claims infallibility! you would have beheld great abomination, of which I have heard the Suabians say, that in thirty years their city Constance or Kostnice[3] will not be purged of the sins which the council committed in their town; some say that the council has scandalised all; others spat out when they beheld the foul deeds."

On the following day—June 27—Hus sent a letter of farewell to the University of Prague with which he had been so closely connected during his studies and during his prolonged struggle against the enemies of church-reform. In this letter, written in Latin according to the custom of the learned of that

[1] The monks of Prague and the Vysehrad, who owned many of the largest estates in Bohemia, became bitter enemies of Hus, as soon as he began to preach against avarice and simony.

[2] *i.e.*, by defaming Bohemia as a heretical country.

[3] The Bohemian name of the town of Constance.

time, Hus exhorts the masters, bachelors, and students of the university to love each other, to root out schisms, to strive above all for the glory of God, bearing in mind how he (Hus) had always striven to further the progress of the university for the honour of God, how he had sorrowed over discord and excesses among the students, how he had wished to join in union the members of the illustrious Bohemian nation. "And behold," Hus continues, "some of those who were dearest to me,[1] for whom I would have laid down my life, have assailed me with insult and calumny, have brought on me much bitterness and a bitter death. May the omnipotent God forgive them, for they know not what they do. I pray for these men with a sincere heart, that God may spare them. Meanwhile, beloved in Jesus Christ, stand by the acknowledged truth, which conquers all and grows ever stronger unto all eternity. Be it also known to you that I have recanted no article nor abjured one. The council also wished that I should declare false all the articles, and any one, which they might extract from my writings. I refused to do so unless their falseness could be proved from Scripture; should any one of the articles have been falsely interpreted I abhor such an interpretation and commend its correction to Jesus Christ, who knows my sincere innermost intentions, not interpreting them in an evil sense, such as was not in my intention. You also I exhort in the Lord to reject whatever evil sense may be given to any of the articles, but to retain the truth. Pray to God for me and greet one another in holy peace."

The last letter of Hus which has been preserved is dated June 29. Written in Bohemian, it contains a short farewell to Hus's friends in Bohemia, to whom it is addressed. Hus writes: "May God be with you and grant you eternal reward for the good which you have done to me and still do, though my body will soon be dead. Do not allow Lord John (of

[1] Hus alludes to those priests who had formerly been his friends, but afterwards became spies and informers against him.

Chlum), that true and noble knight, my benefactor, to incur any danger, I beg you in the name of God, dear Sir Peter the mintmaster and Lady Anna.[1] I beg you also to live well and obey God according to my teaching. To the queen,[2] my most gracious mistress, express my thanks for all the benefits which she has bestowed on me. Greet your household and the other faithful friends, whom I cannot all name. I beg you also to pray for me to the Lord God, within whose holy grace we shall by His help meet. Amen. I write this letter expecting my death-sentence in prison and in fetters, which, as I hope, I endure for the sake of God's law. I beg you in the name of the Lord God not to allow the good priests [3] to be ill-treated."

A quaint postscript follows the letter; it runs thus:

"Peter,[4] dearest friend, keep my fur coat in memory of me.

"Lord Henry Lefl, live in good friendship with your wife. I thank you for your benefits; God will requite them to you.

"Faithful friends, Sir Lider and Lady Margaret, also Master Skuocek,[5] Mikeska,[6] and others, may God grant you eternal reward for the trouble you have taken for me and the benefits you have conferred on me.

"Faithful and beloved Magister Christian,[7] may God be with thee.

"Magister Martin, my disciple, remember that which I have faithfully taught thee. Master Nicholas, Peter, priest of the queen,[8] and other magisters, be zealous for the word of

[1] This passage is not very clear. Peter of Svojsin, Bohemian mintmaster, and his wife, Lady Anna of Frimburg, were friends of Hus and of church-reform. They also had influence at the court of Venceslas. Hus begged them to be helpful to his protector, Lord John of Chlum.

[2] *i.e.*, Queen Sophia.

[3] *i.e.*, those priests who were opposed to simony.

[4] Probably Peter Mladenovic, "Petre amice carissime pellicium tibi serva in mei memoriam." The words are in Latin in the Bohemian letter.

[5] Nothing is known of the persons mentioned here.

[6] Called also Marik Kacer, formerly vice-chancellor of the Bohemian kingdom.

[7] Master Christian (or Kristan) of Prachatice, one of the leading Bohemian church-reformers.

[8] Probably Hus's successor as confessor of the queen.

God. Priest Havlik, preach the word of God. And I beg you all to remain steadfast in God's faith."

There is no doubt that after the hearing on June 8 Hus hoped to be allowed to appear again before the council and expound his views more thoroughly than he had hitherto been allowed to do. The council, on the other hand, was already enraged by the slight and unsuccessful attempts he had been allowed to make to define his views. It was determined no longer to defer the formal condemnation and sentence. The council believed that sufficient evidence against Hus already existed. Few members of the assembly probably troubled to wade through Hus's voluminous Latin works, and those written in his own language were only understood by his own countrymen and persecutors. Yet by means of so-called articles quoted, often unfairly, from Hus's various works, it was thought that full proof of heresy had been established. If Hus was none the less allowed to live nearly a month after the third day of the hearing, this must be attributed to the attempts made to induce him to recant. I have already referred to the reasons why some of Hus's opponents would have preferred such a recantation to a public execution, and have already mentioned the steps taken by the " father " for that purpose. Another attempt to induce Hus to recant was made on July 5, the day preceding the one fixed for his last appearance before the council, and also for his death, should he still remain impenitent. This last attempt at mediation was made directly through the influence of King Sigismund, who was, of course, better acquainted with the state of affairs in Bohemia than were the members of the council. Two Bohemian noblemen, John of Chlum and Venceslas of Duba, visited Hus, accompanied by four bishops and several priests. When Hus had been led out of his prison in the Franciscan monastery, Lord Venceslas addressed him in frank and manly words, which contrast very favourably with the crafty, insincere, and treacherous manner in which the council dealt

with Hus. Duba said: "Behold, Master John, we are laymen and cannot give advice. Consider then if thou feelest thyself guilty of any of the things of which thou art accused. If so, do not hesitate to accept instruction and to recant. But if thou dost not feel guilty of these things that are brought forward against thee, be guided by thy conscience, do nothing against thy conscience, nor lie before the face of God; rather hold unto death to the truth as thou hast understood it." Hus answered humbly and in tears: "Be it known to you that if I knew that I had written or preached anything against the law and the holy mother the church, I would humbly recant it; may God be my witness to this; but I always desire that they should show me doctrines that are better and more credible than those which I have written and taught. If such be shown me, I will gladly recant." Then one of the bishops who was standing near answered, saying: "Wilt thou then be wiser than the whole council?" But the master said to him: "I do not claim to be wiser than the whole council, but, I beg you, give me the meanest (*minimus*) man at the council that he may instruct me in better and more effective doctrine, and I am prepared immediately to recant." In answer to these words the bishops said: "Behold, how obstinate he is in his heresy." Then, after ordering him to be led back to his prison, they went away.[1]

The following day—July 6—had been fixed on for the execution, or as the Bohemians deemed it, the martyrdom of Hus. The council, to give more solemnity to the proceedings, met at the cathedral on this occasion. Sigismund sat on a throne near the high altar in full state, surrounded by all his courtiers. The members of the council were present almost without exception, and the rest of the vast cathedral was filled with spectators, among them almost all the Bohemians who were then at Constance. It was probably in view of their expected presence that Sigismund had made extensive military

[1] Mladenovic.

preparations. He had assembled at Constance a large force of Hungarian mercenaries, who as hereditary enemies of the Bohemians were ready to obey even the most severe orders which they might receive. Archbishop Wallenrod was deputed to conduct Hus from his prison to the cathedral. Hus was "dressed in black with a handsome silver girdle, and wore his robes as a magister." As soon as he had left the prison, the couch on which he had slept during his last days was burnt and the ashes were thrown into the Rhine. The fame of his sanctity had already spread so widely that it was feared that the Bohemians would endeavour to collect relics of the martyr. When Hus, with the archbishop and his gaolers, arrived at the cathedral, he was not at first admitted into the interior of the building, where high mass was being celebrated. A wooden partition had been erected at the gate of the cathedral, behind which Hus waited till the religious ceremonies had been concluded. Hus was then admitted into the interior of the cathedral. After passing the sixth column in the nave he knelt down and prayed fervently for several minutes.[1] The judicial proceedings—if we can venture to give them that name—now began immediately. After the Bishop of Constance had seriously admonished all present not to disturb the proceedings, the Bishop of Lodi preached a short sermon in which he laid stress on the danger of heresy, and also expressed strong disapproval of simony. He no doubt knew that numerous members of the assembly were accused of being simonists, and that this had greatly contributed to strengthen Hus as a preacher of church-reform. Henry de Piro, the lay administrator, or, as it was termed, "procurator" of the council, then proposed that the proceedings against Hus should now be brought to a conclusion, that he might be delivered over to the secular authorities for punishment. One

[1] The spot—I know not on what authority—is still shown to visitors to the cathedral. They are also told that the spot on the pavement where Hus knelt always remains dry even when the rest of it is very moist.

of the bishops was then instructed to read out the articles containing the heresies of which Hus was accused. Sixteen of them were passages derived from the writings of Wycliffe which Hus had incorporated in his works, thus assuming responsibility for them. Hus accepted the responsibility, but he begged to be allowed to explain the sense in which he had interpreted Wycliffe's words. All who have even a slight knowledge of the writings of the English divine know how difficult and often ambiguous they are. Hus's prayer was none the less refused. He was, indeed, on this day granted hardly any hearing and treated with greater brutality than when he previously appeared before the council. Thirty articles chosen from Hus's own works were then read out. They dealt, as had the former ones, mainly with the questions of predestination, of the sacrament—concerning which statements which he had never made were again falsely attributed to Hus,—of the church, and of the limits of the papal power. Hus again attempted to speak, but in spite of the admonition of the Bishop of Constance, he was interrupted by loud cries. When the article which referred to predestination [1] was read out, Hus wished to explain with what limitations he accepted that doctrine. He had always maintained that his teaching on that subject was identical with St. Augustine's. Hus here incidentally referred to the treatment he had received on the part of the council. He again stated that he had come to Constance of his own free will and with a letter of safe-conduct from Sigismund. He looked in this moment at the emperor, who, it was noticed, blushed. The council now determined to silence Hus at any price. Cardinal D'Ailly, whose special bitterness against Hus has been noted by many writers, said to him: "Be silent now, you will afterwards reply to all the articles at the same time." Hus answered: "How can I answer them all at the same time, when I cannot even think of

[1] It ran thus: "Unica et sancta universalis ecclesia quae est praedestinatorum universitas," etc. (Mladenovic).

them all at the same time?" When somewhat later, during the reading of the articles, Hus again attempted to explain his meaning, the Cardinal of Florence, Zabarella, said, rising from his seat: "Be silent, we have already heard thee sufficiently;" then addressing the beadles who surrounded Hus, he said to them: "Force him to be silent." Hus then knelt down and said with a loud voice: "I beg you, in the name of God, to grant me a hearing, that those who are present may not think that I hold heretical opinions. After that deal with me as you see fit." The prohibition, however, was maintained. Hus then for a time ceased to address the council, wishing to avoid that physical violence be used against him by the beadles and mercenary soldiers within the precincts of the cathedral. He continued to kneel, and prayed with eyes lifted heavenward, commending, as Mladenovic writes, his cause to God, the justest of judges.

After the articles followed the depositions of the, mostly Bohemian, witnesses against Hus. One of the accusers, a doctor of divinity, stated that Hus had declared "that he was and would be a fourth person in the divinity."[1] It is not known who this doctor was, but suspicion certainly points to Stephen Palec, next to Michael de causis the most impudent and the most unscrupulous of the enemies of Hus. This accusation of blasphemy of the deepest dye roused Hus to make one more attempt to record a protest. "Let that doctor," he said, "be named who has deposed this against me." The bishop who was reading out the articles answered: "It is unnecessary that he should be named." It is, however, probable that Hus was allowed to answer at some length.[2] The mercenaries who surrounded him, contrary to the orders which they had received, used no violence against him. The

[1] "Quomodo ipse se quartam fore et esse personam in divinis posuisset." The importance of this accusation has been overlooked by many writers on Hus.

[2] This appears very probable, as Mladenovic, referring to Hus's remarks, writes: Magister *inter alia* dixit.

last accusation against Hus appeared so monstrous that even uneducated men felt the cruelty of preventing the accused from replying. Hus said, among other things: "Be it far from me that I should call myself the fourth person of the divinity; such a thought could find no place in my mind. But I consistently affirm that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one God and one entity and a trinity of persons." It should be mentioned that almost all modern writers belonging to the Roman Church, Hefele in particular, have admitted the absolute falsehood of this infamous accusation. Hus was, lastly, accused of having appealed to God, a proceeding which was declared to be heretical. In a brief statement which Hus was allowed to make he declared that he firmly maintained that there could be no surer appeal than that to Jesus Christ, the Lord, who is not influenced by evil gifts, nor deceived by false witnesses, but who judges all according to their merits.

When all the articles derived from Wycliffe's and from Hus's own writings and the statements of the witnesses had been read out, it became certain that the council intended to terminate the trial of Hus without further delay. He was not allowed to reply to the vast amount of accusations that had been brought against him; it would indeed, as Hus pointed out, have been impossible to do so at one continuous sitting. A declaration that Hus had sent to the council on July 1 was, however, read out.[1] He declared that, fearing to offend God and to commit perjury, he could not recant all the articles, nor indeed any of those that had been wrongly attributed to him by false witnesses, who had accused him—and he called on God as witness of this—of preaching, asserting, and defending views that he had never held. He further declared that if any statement which was really contained in his writings[2] was heretical, he detested and abhorred it, and was ready to recant it.

[1] The document is printed in full in Von der Hardt, T. iv. p. 389.

[2] This refers to the statement constantly repeated by Hus, that his writings had been incorrectly quoted.

Sentence on Hus was then immediately passed. Two decrees were read out by "a bald and old Italian priest." The first ordered all Hus's writings, both in Latin and in his own language, to be destroyed. Hus said: "Why do you condemn my books, when I have always wished and asked for other better books that shall refute them (mine), and I still wish it? But up to now you have shown me no writings in contradiction to my own, nor have you proved that these contain any heresies. As to my Bohemian writings, which you have never seen, why do you condemn them? The second sentence dealt with the person of Hus. He was declared to be a true and manifest heretic, who was to be delivered over to the secular authorities for punishment. It has already been mentioned that, in accordance with an ancient custom, the church did not itself pronounce the sentence of death. Hus then knelt down, and praying with a loud voice said: "Lord Jesus Christ, forgive all my enemies, I entreat you, because of your great mercifulness. You know that they have falsely accused me, brought forth false witnesses against me, devised false articles against me. Forgive them because of your immense mercifulness." When they heard this, many of the members of the council and particularly the foremost ecclesiastical dignitaries derided him.[1] The ignominious ceremonies known as the degradation and deconsecration were then performed. Hus was dressed in full ecclesiastical vestments and the chalice and paten were placed in his hands. Then the ecclesiastical vestments were removed and the chalice and paten again taken from him. While this was being done, the Archbishop of Milan, who with five bishops officiated at this function, said: "Oh, cursed Judas, who hast left the realms of peace and allied thyself with the Jews, we to-day take from thee the chalice of salvation." Hus replied that he hoped to drink of the chalice in the heavenly kingdom

[1] "Et cum hoc dixisset, multi et praesertim sacerdotum principes deridebant illum" (Mladenovic).

on that very day. When these ceremonies had ended, the bishops said: "We commit thy soul to the devil." Hus answered: "And I commit it to the most sacred Lord Jesus Christ." A high paper cap was then as a sign of derision placed on the head of the martyr. On it were written the words: *Hic est heresiarcha.* Sigismund then requested Louis Count Palatine [1] to hand over Hus to the beadles of the city of Constance. A large armed force, consisting of some of the townsmen of Constance, Sigismund's Hungarian mercenaries, and troops in the service of the Count Palatine and other German princes—about 3000 men in all—accompanied Hus. A large crowd, including many Bohemians, among them Mladenovic, joined the mournful procession, though Sigismund, hoping as far as possible to exclude the Bohemians, had given orders that the city gates should be closed as soon as Hus had passed. From the cathedral Hus was led through the churchyard—where his books were just being burnt—along the street now known as the "Huss Strasse," past the house of the widow Fida, and through the Schnetz gate to the place of execution. That spot,[2] about a quarter of a mile from the Schnetz gate, is now marked by a stone with an inscription, and has become a favourite place of pilgrimage for Hus's countrymen. The account of the last moments of the martyr can best be given in the words of Mladenovic,[3] who was present. He writes: "When he (Hus) had arrived at the

[1] Lenfant (*Histoire du Concile de Constance*) relates that when the elector Palatine Otho Henry, the last of his line, died childless, he said that God punished the sins of the forefathers even in the third and fourth generations, and that he had been punished because his great-great-grandfather, the Count Palatine Louis, had, by order of the emperor, conducted Hus to the stake.

[2] Contrary to what has been often stated, the spot is not in the immediate vicinity of the Rhine.

[3] That indefatigable Bohemian scholar, Mr. Patera, some years ago discovered and published a previously unknown contemporary Bohemian account of the death of Hus. I had intended to compare it with the account of Mladenovic, but, finding that this would interfere with the course of the narrative, I have preferred to give as an appendix a translation of the whole of the account.

place of torture he began, on bent knees, with his arms extended and his eyes lifted to heaven, to recite psalms with great fervour, particularly, 'Have mercy on me, oh God,' and 'In thee, oh Lord, do I put my trust.' He repeated the verse: 'Into thy hand I commit my spirit,' and it was noticed by his friends that he prayed joyfully and with a beautiful countenance. Now the place of torture was among gardens in a field on the road that leads from the city of Constance in the direction of the castle of Gottlieben, between the gate and the moat at the outworks of the city. Some laymen who stood near the spot said: 'We know not what he has formerly said or done, but we now see and hear that he prays, and speaks holy words!' Others said: 'Assuredly it were well that he should have a confessor, who would hear him.' But a priest who was riding past, clad in a green doublet that was lined with red silk, said: 'He may not be heard, neither may a confessor be granted to him, for he is a heretic.' Master John, however, while still in prison, had made confession to a doctor (of divinity), who was a monk,[1] and had been heard by him, and had received absolution, as he mentions in one of the letters which he sent to his disciples from prison. While he (Hus) was praying, as mentioned before, the crown of blasphemy, as it was called, fell from his head. He noticed that three devils were painted on it and smiled. And some of the mercenaries who stood near said: 'Let it be again placed on his head, that he be burnt together with his masters, the devils whom he served!'

"Rising from his prayers by order of the lictor (soldier, or town-official), Hus said with a loud and intelligible voice, so that he could be well heard by his disciples: 'Lord Jesus Christ, I will bear patiently and humbly this horrible, shameful, and cruel death for the sake of Thy gospel and the preaching of Thy word.' When he was led past the spectators, he addressed them, begging them not to believe that he had ever

[1] "Cuidam doctori monacho."

THE BURNING OF JOHN HUS, 1415
SCATTERING OF HUS'S ASHES

(From Reichental's Chronicle of the Council of Constance)

held, preached, or taught the tenets which had been ascribed to him by false witnesses. He was then stripped of his clothes and tied with cords to a stake, and his arms were turned backward to the stake. When his face was at first turned to the east, some of the spectators said: 'Let him not be turned to the east, for he is a heretic, but to the west;' and it was done thus. When a rusty chain was placed round his neck, he said, smiling, to the lictors: 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, my Redeemer, was bound with a harder and heavier chain, and I, poor wretch, fear not to be fettered with this chain for His sake.' Now the stake consisted of a thick pole, which they had sharpened at one end and driven into the ground in this field; under the feet of the master they placed two faggots and some loads of wood. When attached to the stake he retained one of his boots, and a fetter on one of his feet. They then heaped up round his body wooden faggots mixed with straw so that they reached up to his chin." Mladenovic then refers to the last attempt—it was little more than a formality—made by the imperial marshal, Pappenheim, to induce Hus to recant, and then describes the martyrdom. "When the lictors," he writes, "lighted the pile, the master first sang with a loud voice, 'Christ, son of the living God, have mercy on us,' and then again, 'Christ, son of the living God, have mercy on us.' When a third time he began singing, 'Who art born of the virgin Mary,' the wind soon blew the flames into his face; then, still silently praying and moving his lips, he expired in the Lord. The space of time during which, after having become silent, he still moved before dying was that required to recite two, or at most three paternosters." Mladenovic then describes the detestable outrages that were committed on the remains of the body of Hus[1] to prevent their being preserved as relics by his countrymen.

That the execution of Hus would have world-wide conse-

[1] These ignoble outrages are described more fully by Von der Hardt, T. iv. p. 450.

quences seems to have been foreseen by many of his contemporaries, and legends soon arose round the memory of the martyr. Thus it was said that an old woman had brought faggots to add to the funeral pile, and that Hus had then spoken the words: *O sancta simplicitas.* It was also said that Hus—and this legend was undoubtedly based on remarks of Hus that have been mentioned in this work—had predicted that he would have a successor who would be successful in the attempt in which he had failed—the general reform of the church.[1]

Few events in history have given rise to more controversy than the trial and execution of Hus. In offering an opinion on this matter, it is necessary to distinguish between the conduct of the council and that of Sigismund. According to the ruling of the Roman Church, it was the duty of the council, as there was then no pope, to declare heretics all who differed from the teaching of the church, and to hand over such men to the temporal authorities. The latter were empowered by a decree of the Emperor Frederick II. to order them to be burnt. No faith could or should be kept with heretics.[2] Anything that resembled a *bona-fide* trial was, therefore, out of question. No legal representative could be granted a heretic. He had merely to appear before the council, recant everything he was accused of having said, and receive condign punishment. Gerson, one of the principal actors in the tragedy of Constance, strongly upheld this standpoint,[3] and it is that also of the earlier Roman writers on the death of Hus. Their attitude is certainly manlier and more straightforward than that of later defenders of the council, who falsely accused Hus of having attempted to fly from Constance, of having preached and said mass publicly at Constance, etc. It is true that, even if we

[1] The tale that Hus had said that they would indeed burn the goose ("hus" signifies goose in Bohemian), but that afterwards a swan would come, whom they would not burn, is founded on the totally erroneous supposition that "Luther" signifies "swan" in Bohemian.

[2] "Ad poenam quoque pertinet et odium hereticorum quod fides illis data servanda non sit" (*Simancha Inst. cath.*, pp. 46, 52, quoted by Lord Acton).

[3] See Schwab, *Johannes Gerson*, particularly p. 583.

admit the standpoint of the council, the attempts to interrupt Hus by cries and insults when he endeavoured to speak remain indefensible.

We have, however, to consider a further point which has recently attracted considerable attention: Was Hus a heretic? In other words, did he hold any doctrine that was opposed to the teaching of the Church of Rome in the development which it had attained at the beginning of the fifteenth century? It has here been repeatedly stated, and cannot be sufficiently often reaffirmed, that the principal cause on which Hus staked his life was that of church-reform. An intensely pious and rigidly virtuous priest, he viewed with what to worldly men may appear a puerile feeling of horror and indignation the unspeakable degradation of the Bohemian clergy. It has been necessary in this book, destined for the general public, to withhold much evidence on this point. The fact that the ruling powers of the Roman Church made no attempt to discountenance the vices of its clergy, together with the study of Wycliffe's works, then led Hus to adverse criticism of the ecclesiastical organisation of the church, and of papacy in particular. Though there were, as already mentioned, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries writers who maintained the overwhelming power and authority of the pope as strongly and as unconditionally as has been done recently, yet freedom of opinion on such matters still existed at the time of Hus, and he cannot be called a heretic for expressing views contrary to those of Rome on questions which only the councils of Trent and the Vatican have declared to be matters of dogma. It is certain that many of the accusations against Hus were absolutely false. This applies not only to the monstrous statement that Hus had pretended to be a fourth person within the divinity, but also to such accusations as that Hus had declared the sacrament to be invalid when administered by an unworthy priest. Hus had in his writings frequently and distinctly expressed the contrary opinion. The question

therefore arose whether a revision of the judgment on Hus, such as took place in the case of Joan of Arc, would not be possible. Professor Kalousek of the Bohemian University of Prague, one of the most distinguished historians of Bohemia, as long ago as in 1869, addressed a pseudonymous letter to one of the newspapers of Prague suggesting such a revision. The matter at the time attracted considerable attention, and several distinguished Roman Catholic priests published replies to the letter. In a lengthy and very fair work on the teaching of Hus, Dr. Anton Lenz, one of the most eminent Bohemian divines, though doing full justice to the moral qualities, the integrity, and piety of Hus, yet maintains that he was a heretic, and that the council was justified in declaring him to be one. It cannot, however, be denied that among the heretical views which Dr. Lenz in his able book attributed to Hus, some refer to matters which the Roman Church had not at that time declared to be dogmas. Another Bohemian priest, Dr. Francis Sulc, has published [1] a Latin and Bohemian version of the famed thirty articles against Hus, and has printed with each article the recognised teaching of the Roman Church on the subject in question. To one who has no pretence to write as a theologian it certainly appears that on certain questions, that of predestination in particular, Hus's teaching did differ from that of the Roman Church, even in the development which it had reached in the fifteenth century. The question is, however, a very difficult one, and Professor Kalousek has in a recent lecture truly stated that much further study of the life and the works of Hus is required. Even quite recently valuable works of the Bohemian church-reformer that were hidden away in formerly inaccessible libraries have been made public. It is hardly necessary to add that, in view of the present current of opinion in the Roman church, a rehabilitation of Hus is now much more improbable than at the time mentioned above.

[1] Privately printed at the press of the Bishop of Kralove Hradec (Königgrätz).

Opinion will always differ with regard to the question whether Hus should be considered as the last of the mediæval reformers who wished only to purify the church and restore it to its primitive simplicity, or as a forerunner of the great church-reformers of the sixteenth century. Extreme writers of both parties have unanimously adopted the latter supposition. Moderate writers—who it is unnecessary to say are few in number—have alone sometimes expressed doubts. That Hus was a forerunner of Luther has been constantly maintained by ultramontane writers, and they extend to him the unconditionally adverse judgment which they pronounce on the German reformer. On the other hand, most German Protestant writers on the Hussite movement, such as Krummel, Lechler, Neander, have also declared Hus to be the precursor of the German reformation, and have praised him as such. Dr. Harnack alone has expressed a contrary opinion.[1] Luther himself undoubtedly considered Hus as his forerunner. In a well-known passage of his letters, written when he had just begun to study the works of Hus, he remarks: "We have all been Hussites without knowing it." On many occasions Luther expressed his admiration for Hus in a manner not dissimilar from that in which the great Bohemian lauded Wycliffe. Thus in the introduction to his edition of Hus's letters, the German reformer calls him *optimum et piisimum virum*—to quote but one of many instances.[2] Elsewhere Luther writes: "If this man was not a noble, strong, and dauntless martyr and confessor of Christ, then will it indeed be hard for any man to obtain salvation."

[1] "Die wiclifitisch—hussitische Bewegung . . . muss als die reifste Ausgestaltung der mittelalterlichen Reformbewegungen gelten. Allein es wird sich zeigen dass auch sie zwar vieles gelockert und vorbereitet, jedoch keinen reformatorischen Gedanken zum Ausdrucke gebracht hat: auch sie hält sich auf dem augustinisch—franciscanischem Boden" (Dr. Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, vol. iii. pp. 412-413).

[2] It is a proof of Luther's great admiration for Hus that when sending a wedding-present to his friend Nicholas Specht he chose a portrait of "the saintly John Hus." (Letter to Nicholas Specht, December 12, 1538—*The Letters of Martin Luther*. Selected and translated by Margaret A. Currie.)

Hus's countrymen have never taken much interest in these questions. To them he has always been a fearless enemy of simony, profligacy, and the unlimited power of the clergy, and a brave champion of his country and its nationality. To quote words I wrote more than ten years ago:[1] "If neglecting for a moment the minutiae of mediæval theological controversy, we consider as a martyr that man who willingly sacrifices his individual life for what he firmly believes to be the good of humanity at large, who 'takes the world's life on him and his own lays down,' then assuredly there is no truer martyr in the world's annals than John of Husinec."

Very different from the judgment which should be passed on the attitude of the council with regard to Hus is that which we must pass on Sigismund. The council had made no promise of safety to Hus, and was acting in accordance with the teaching of the church when it urged Sigismund not to keep faith with a heretic. Sigismund, on the other hand, had in the most formal and solemn way assured Hus that he would be allowed to safely proceed to Constance, to be heard there freely, and whatever sentence should be passed on him, to return unharmed to Bohemia.[2] It is difficult to conceive baser treachery than that of Sigismund with regard to Hus. I must refer the reader to an earlier chapter of this book[3] for the motives that induced Sigismund to entice Hus to Constance, whence—this the King of Hungary had from the first decided—he was never to return to his own country. Yet Sigismund's conduct has found defenders, and not only among the extreme adherents of the Church of Rome. One of Sigismund's strongest partisans indeed does not, or did not, belong to any Christian community. It is stated that Sigismund, as a member of the Roman Church, was obliged to obey its com-

[1] *A History of Bohemian Literature*, p. 141.

[2] The distinguished Roman Catholic priest, Dr. Lenz, whom I have repeatedly quoted, writes: "Sigismund broke his word by not handing over Hus to the King of Bohemia after he had been condemned. He was not justified in carrying out the sentence of the council on the unhappy master."

[3] See Chapter VI.

mand not to keep faith with a heretic, and that he had even exceeded his powers by granting a safe-conduct to Hus. This argument might have had some force at other periods of the history of the church, but at this one it certainly had none. Personal violence had been used against Pope Boniface VIII. and more recently a pope had been besieged at his castle of Avignon. Sigismund himself had imprisoned Pope John XXIII. Even among those who were faithful believers in the teaching of Rome, the popes and prelates had at that time fallen into disesteem and even contempt. Sigismund would certainly not have hesitated to ignore the demands of Pope John XXIII., and afterwards of the council with regard to Hus, had he thought it in his interest to do so. It is true that he shielded himself by invoking the authority of the church when his treachery caused general indignation in Bohemia. It has also been stated that the safe-conduct granted by Sigismund only assured the safe arrival of Hus at Constance. This, however, is in direct contradiction with the wording of the safe-conduct as well as with the fact that Hus started from Prague without this document. It has also been argued in defence of Sigismund that, if the safe-conduct given to Hus had guaranteed his immunity, his trial would have been illusory, as no punishment could have been inflicted. This argument is also founded on a misconception. Had the safe-conduct not been violated, Hus would have been conducted back to his country, and punished according to the decision of his sovereign, King Venceslas of Bohemia. That this by no means necessarily meant immunity will be clearly understood by all who remember that Venceslas had once before threatened Hus with death at the stake.

The contemporaries of Sigismund, and the Bohemians in particular, were almost unanimous in condemning Sigismund's misdeed. When the news of the execution of Hus reached the Bohemian court, King Venceslas said: "They ought not to have treated him in this manner as he had a safe-conduct."

The king also expressed great indignation at the behaviour of the Bohemian priests, who by their false accusations and depositions had greatly contributed to the condemnation of Hus.[1] The Bohemian people never forgave Sigismund, "the dragon of the apocalypse," as they called him, his treachery, and this feeling contributed largely to the intense bitterness and cruelty of the Hussite wars.

It is needless to say that during the last painful months of his life Hus had little time for literary activity. Except a few minor treatises, there belong to this period only a large number of letters. I have already copiously, though not, I think, in consideration of their value, too copiously quoted these letters.

[1] *Scriptores rerum Bohemicarum*, ed. Palacky, vol. iii. pp. 20-21.

# CHAPTER IX

## HUS AS A BOHEMIAN PATRIOT

WHILE the great part that Hus played as a church-reformer is widely known, his great importance as a Bohemian patriot is almost unknown beyond the borders of his native land. Many Bohemians who are firm adherents of the Roman Church therefore feel great sympathy for Hus, admiring not only his saintly character, but also his devotion to his country and its language, to the development of which he so largely contributed. As has already been mentioned, Husinec, the birthplace of the great church-reformer, lies in a district in Western Bohemia which is near the Bavarian frontier and where the German nationality marches with the Bohemian one. No doubt, in consequence of this proximity, the national feeling is very strongly developed in this part of the country. Though little is known of his early youth, it is certain that Hus was brought up as a strong Bohemian patriot. Though so saintly a man as Hus was incapable of hatred of Germans or of men of any country, the injustice of the system which placed in the hands of foreigners—mostly men hostile to the Bohemian nation—most of the dignities of the university and the largest part of the ecclesiastical patronage, filled him with great and justifiable indignation. In one of his earliest sermons, which has already been mentioned,[1] Hus spoke very strongly on the humiliating and subordinate position of the Bohemians in their own country. Like the Bohemian patriots of all periods —for they have retained this characteristic up to the present day—Hus was devotedly attached to the national language. The constant contact with Germany and the fact that many

[1] See p. 73.

Bohemians, particularly nobles, married German wives, always endangered the purity of the Bohemian language, and furthered the introduction of many German words. Skilfully seeking an analogy in the records of the Old Testament, Hus has enlarged on this subject in one of his most characteristic sermons.[1] "It is written," he says, "in the book of the good Nehemiah:[2] 'I saw Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and beheaded some. I cursed them in the name of God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves. I said: Did not Solomon King of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin. Shall we then being disobedient commit a mortal sin, and transgressing against our God marry strange wives?'

"You see then that this good priest (Nehemiah) forbade the Jews to marry heathen women, even if they accepted their faith, and that for two reasons: firstly, that these women should not lead them away from God and to idols, as they led Solomon, that king beloved of God and wise; secondly, that the Hebrew language should not perish. Thus he (Nehemiah) says that he heard children who knew not even Hebrew, but spoke in a half-heathen speech. And therefore he smote them badly, whipped them, and the men he slew. Thus also should the princes, lords, knights, patricians, citizens prevent their people from committing unchastity, and particularly adultery.

[1] *Vyklad desatera Boziho prikazanie* (Exposition of God's Ten Commandments), Erben's edition of Hus's Bohemian works, vol. i. chap. iv. pp. 132-133.

[2] Nehemiah, chapter xiii. 23-27. Hus's quotation differs slightly from the English version of the gospel.

They should not permit this, but should whip them and beat them—I will not say slay them, though this holy man beheaded them; for in later times Christ the merciful king would not allow the adultress to be immediately sentenced to death. Thus also should we behave that the Bohemian language perish not. If a Bohemian marries a German, the children must immediately learn Bohemian and not divide their speech in two (speak partly Bohemian, partly German). For this division causes but jealousy, dissension, anger, and quarrels. Therefore did the Emperor Charles, King of Bohemia, of holy memory, order the citizens of Prague to teach their children Bohemian, to speak it, and to plead at law in Bohemian in the town hall, which the Germans call ' Rothaus.' And just as Nehemiah, when he heard Jewish children speaking partly in the speech of Ashdod, and not knowing Hebrew (well), whipped them and beat them, thus would those citizens of Prague deserve a whipping, as well as those other Bohemians whose speech is half Bohemian and half German—men who use such German words as *Hantuch, Knedlik, Shorz, Hausz-knecht.*[1] And who can describe how greatly they have confused (rendered unintelligible) the Bohemian language? Therefore a true Bohemian who listens to them, and hears them speak, understands not what they say. Thence spring ill-will, envy, dissensions, quarrels, and dishonour to Bohemia."

This curious passage shows how strongly developed the feeling of racial antipathy between Bohemians and Germans was at the beginning of the fifteenth century. How fully Hus felt with his countrymen is proved by the fact that so pious and kind-hearted a man did not hesitate, following the example of the Hebrew prophet, to place the marrying of a foreign wife

[1] I have preserved Hus's spelling of the one or two German words given above. The Bohemian language is so little known in England that it would be useless to translate this passage in full. Hus gives a list of Bohemian words, and adds the corrupted word derived from the German which had taken its place in popular parlance.

on the same level as the most heinous sins. How little the popular feeling among the Bohemians has changed in the period of nearly five centuries that divides us from the time of Hus is proved by the fact that almost all political interest in Bohemia in the present day centres in the "question of languages," the *Sprachenfrage*, as the Germans call it.

Hus's endeavours to strengthen and develop his native language were, however, by no means limited to the purely negative task of opposing the encroachments of the German tongue. He well knew that his own language, to become exclusively the language of the state and of the scholars of Bohemia, required development and improvement in many respects; even as regards such elementary matters as orthography great disorder prevailed; no generally accepted rules existed. In the scanty written documents and in the language of the people there still remained many traces of the different dialects from which the Bohemian language originally sprang. Hus first attempted to establish a universally recognised written language for the whole extensive district—including Moravia and Silesia as well as Bohemia proper—in which the Bohemian language is spoken. He first attempted a task in which the revivers of the Bohemian tongue in the nineteenth century were finally and definitely successful.[1] These men were indeed greatly indebted to Hus, as well as later to the writers of the Bohemian brotherhood. While residing at Prague Hus had already directed his attention to the improvement of his native language. The result of these studies was his *Orthographia Bohemica*, which probably dates from the year 1411.[2] The Bohemians had, in distinction from many other Slavic races, adopted the Latin characters, which are inadequate to render many sounds peculiar to Slavic speech. Many different attempts had been made to obviate this

[1] See my *History of Bohemian Literature.*

[2] Flajshans, *Literarni cinnost Mistra Jana Husi* (Literary Activity of Master John Hus), pp. 74-75.

"anarchy of spelling"—as Dr. Flajshans calls it—which resulted from this inability. Hus, however, was the first who, in his work that has just been mentioned, introduced the diacritic signs which in a modified form are still used in the Bohemian language. During the period in which he studied and afterwards lectured at the university Hus had generally spoken and written in Latin. When he was an exile, no longer in close contact with his university, but had, on the other hand, many opportunities of hearing the common talk of the country people to whom he preached, he devoted yet more attention to his native language. The earlier Bohemian writers, even Stitny, had written in a somewhat pedantic fashion similar to that of the ponderous writers of mediæval Latin. Hus, as he himself tells[1] us, formed his style on the common speech of the people, which he ennobled and raised to the rank of a language adapted to the expression of theological and philosophical thought, though the earlier merits of Stitny in this respect must not be overlooked. That Hus, who shared the great devotion to the holy gospel which is a characteristic of all Bohemian church-reformers, should have given much time and study to the Scriptures is but natural. He endeavoured to make the Bible more accessible to his countrymen, and this may be considered as one of the causes why he incurred the intense hatred of the opulent Bohemian clergy. It appears, though the matter is somewhat obscure,[2] that, as early as the second half of the fourteenth century, parts of the Bible had been translated into Bohemian by various writers, and that these parts had been collected and joined together about the year 1410. These translations were, however, of very unequal value; some were written in

[1] "Let him who wishes to read (my works) know that I write in the manner in which I am in the habit of speaking. . . . I beg every one who shall write to write not otherwise than I have written. If I have made a mistake about a letter or omitted a syllable or a word, correct it. . . . Many, thinking they understand better, efface that which was well written and write (something) wrong instead." (Introduction to *Postilla*, ed. Flajshans.)

[2] Flajshans, *Mistr Jan Hus*, p. 276.

the rough Bohemian in use about the year 1350, others in the more refined language of the fifteenth century. Some teemed with mistakes of the grossest description; others bore witness to the learning of the masters of the university. Of these some, including Hus, were acquainted with the Hebrew language.[1] Hus undertook the difficult task of revising and correcting the already existent translations of the Bible, and it may be said that it was mainly through him that the Scriptures became more accessible to the Bohemian people.[2]

In close connection with Hus's striving to render his countrymen more familiar with the sacred documents which form the basis of Christianity, reference should be made to his endeavours to facilitate the participation of laymen in the religious rites, and more especially in church-song, which had gradually become an exclusive privilege of the clergy. This part of the activity of Hus had, up to recent times, been entirely neglected, and only recently scholars of the University of Prague have thrown some light on matters that were formerly almost unknown.[3] In consequence of the ever-increasing claims of the clergy to superiority over laymen, the custom—no doubt general in the time of the primitive church—that the congregation should join in the singing during religious services had gradually been abandoned. This caused great resentment among the people, particularly among the Bohemians, with whom a taste for music is innate. The early Bohemian church-reformers, Milic in particular, were deeply interested in this matter, and Hus here walked completely in their footsteps. We find here, as in so many other cases, close connection between Hus and his forerunners, while as

[1] Hus's acquaintance with the Hebrew language is proved by passages in the *Orthographia Bohemica* which has just been mentioned—and in other of his works.

[2] Though so much study has recently been devoted to Hus by Bohemian scholars, his work as a translator and editor of Scripture requires further research.

[3] I must here acknowledge my great indebtedness to Dr. Nejedly, whose work, *Pocatky Husitskeho zpevu* (the beginnings of Hussite song) is most valuable.

regards music and art generally the somewhat puritanic views of Wycliffe were directly antagonistic to those of the Bohemians. This, as Dr. Nejedly writes, is a matter by no means devoid of importance if we consider the arguments of those who attempted to prove that Hus was a mere copyist and imitator of Wycliffe. The theories on which the two opponents of Rome agreed were mainly common property of all mediæval opponents of the Church of Rome, while the natures and characters of Hus and Wycliffe were in most respects different, even antagonistic. The somewhat pedantic and matter-of-fact nature of Wycliffe, devoid of artistic instincts, contrasts absolutely with the enthusiastic and fanciful character of Hus, who fully possessed the fondness for vocal and instrumental music that is so characteristic of his countrymen.

Hus has in his works frequently expounded his views with regard to singing in church. He declares that song is one of the three forms of devotion which constitute the religious services of the heavenly temple in our home (heaven). The religious services of the temples of the soul and the body should conform to this. The song of those who dwell in our celestial home consists of praise of God and of thanksgiving.[1] Elsewhere Hus mentions that Christ sang a hymn of thanksgiving when He proceeded with His disciples to the Mount of Olives.[2] In yet another passage of his writings he advised the mournful to expel the plague of sorrow from their hearts by the sweetness of song.[3] Many other passages could be quoted to prove the importance which Hus attached to devotional music. Hus's appointment to the Bethlehem chapel afforded

[1] "Sunt tria pertinentia ad officium templi coelestis in patria, quibus debet se conformare officium templi in anima et officium templi corporalis extra in materia, scilicet cantus, cultus et visio vultus. Cantus templi coelestis habitatorum in patria consistit in divina laude et gratiarum actione." Explicatio in psalmum cxviii. (*Hus Opera*, 1715, vol. ii. p. 456.)

[2] "Et hymno dicto—id est gratiarum actione Deo—exierunt in montem Oliveti." Passio Christi ex quatuor evangelistis (*Hus Opera*, 1715, vol. ii. p. 17).

[3] "Crebra psalmodiae dulcedine nocivam tristitiae pestem de corde pellat." Explicatio in epistola Jacobi (*Hus Opera*, 1715, vol. ii. p. 230).

him the desired opportunity. The chapel soon became famed for its singing. It had, indeed, originally been built for preaching, particularly in the national language, and the preaching continued mainly to attract the people, as is natural, if we consider the unrivalled eloquence of Hus. Yet the singing of hymns by the congregation soon became a very important feature. In his interesting work Dr. Nejedly thus describes the services in the Bethlehem chapel at this period: "The people assembled to hear Hus's sermons, which inspired with enthusiasm all classes represented in the congregation. All were greatly moved when the sermon ended, and then a low mass was said. The people had previously already been in the habit of singing *Hospodine pomiluj ny*[1] (the Lord have mercy on us) and *Buoh vsemohuci* (Almighty God) after the sermons, and now they did so also after the sermons of Hus. Psychologically the enthusiastic disposition of the crowd required some outlet; it could find no better one than in song. Only a low mass was permitted in the chapel after the sermon, and this did not interfere with the singing and indeed rather helped it. We can, therefore, consider these regulations of the Bethlehem chapel as being largely the reason why the people sang there more than elsewhere, and why popular singing in churches sprang from there. Hus well understood the disposition of the crowds who listened to his sermons and helped them to give vent to it in that manner which is most natural to an emotional multitude, that is to say, by means of song. Hus's delight in church song, even though it had a liturgic[2] character, had a strong influence on the development of devotional music of a popular character." The then established system of singing in churches, the "liturgic" one, as Dr. Nejedly calls it, was very faulty. Hus always declared himself its determined enemy. The total reform of the

[1] See my *History of Bohemian Literature*, p. 8.

[2] Dr. Nejedly describes as the "liturgic" system that which allowed only priests, and men in minor orders, to sing in church while the rest of the congregation remained silent.

Bohemian Church—the cause for which Hus lived and died—was to include a reform of church-song also. The part which the congregation was allowed to take in the singing at religious services had, through the influence of the priesthood—desirous here also to accentuate the difference between the clergy and the laity—become very insignificant. The singers—monks, or ecclesiastics who had only received the minor orders—showed a complete want of reverence, and mechanically accomplished their duties in a negligent manner that deeply offended so pious a Christian as was Hus. The priests, and particularly the friars, deacons, and acolytes who were paid for their services, behaved in a most unseemly manner, roving about the church and scoffing at the congregation. Some sang so falsely that they were derided by the congregation, and a Bohemian audience is always critical with regard to music. Their principal fault was, however, the indecent hurry with which they despatched their duties as singers. Hus blames this abuse in quaint words: "Such a (singer)," he writes,[1] "grinds his words without using his lips or teeth, and they seem as the sound of a millstone, which thunders out: tr, tr, tr!" It was Hus's endeavour to remedy such abuses and to introduce in his chapel "quiet song and prayer that should be pleasing both to the learned and to the simple."

It was a very important and by no means easy task that Hus undertook when he attempted to replace the Latin singing in his chapel by songs in the national language. With the exception of the one or two hymns that have already been mentioned, there then existed only secular songs in the Bohemian language, and these had frequently a frivolous and even obscene character. Hus, who thoroughly understood his countrymen, knew that singing of some sort is to them a necessity. He, therefore—like some more recent church-reformers—endeavoured to expel the objectionable songs that

[1] *Vyklad modlitby pane* (Exposition of the Lord's Prayer), chap. lxxxiii.; Erben edition, i. p. 307.

were popular, and replace them by others that were of a pious character. He began by translating into Bohemian some of the Latin hymns which the people were in the habit of hearing, though of course without understanding them. As it had already proved to be possible to introduce the native language into the pulpit, Hus resolved to render the singing of Bohemian hymns in the churches general. Here, as in all his efforts to further church-reform, Hus was confronted by the violent hostility of the Bohemian prelacy. The fact that, as hymns were now sung in the national language, women were able to take part in the singing and were permitted to do so, met with great opposition and derision on the part of the enemies of church-reform. They were all the more exasperated because the Bohemian women from Queen Sophia downward had from the first been fervent adherents of Hus. The evil life of the priests was a cause of great resentment to the women of Bohemia. As on so many other occasions, the monk Stephen of Dolein is prominent among those who attacked the church-reformers. He accused them of having, contrary to the regulations of the church, sung masses and hymns together with women in the common Bohemian language.[1]

Hus was very indignant at this opposition. "Ha, ha," he writes,[2] "where are those slanderers and babblers who endeavour to prevent the Bohemian language from being honoured?" To encourage singing in the native language Hus established at the Bethlehem chapel what Dr. Nejedly calls a "school" in which the people were taught the new devotional songs in their own language. There was, however, at first a great scarcity of such songs. Only four Bohemian

[1] "Et iterum recenti confictione contra ritum ecclesiae junctis vobis mulieribus et Begutis (*i.e.* beguines) vestris in choro cantatis cum eisdem tam missas, quam alias cantilenas in vulgari Bohemico, quae societas scripturis testantibus clericis non convenit. Utinam caveretis earundem societatem vel in thoro!" (Stephanus Dolanensis epistola ad Husitas, *Pez Thesaurus Anecdotorum Novissimus*, vol. iv. part 2, p. 590.) The engrained coarseness of the monk Stephen is apparent here also.

[2] *Exposition of the Lord's Prayer* (Erben's edition, vol. i. p. 313).

hymns, among them the *Hospodine pomiluj ny*—one of the oldest documents in the Bohemian language—had hitherto been recognised by the Church of Rome. Through Hus's influence, however, other ancient Bohemian hymns began to be sung in churches, and new ones were composed, or adapted from the Latin. In consequence of the generally prevailing religious enthusiasm, new hymns—often the work of unknown writers—suddenly appeared in Bohemia, and were, after a short time, sung in all parts of the country. This was yet more the case after the death of Hus, and it is only then that we meet with the famous Hussite songs, of which the famed "All ye warriors of God"[1] is the prototype, which partook both of the character of a hymn and of that of a war-song. Many of these hymns, however, became known during the life of Hus, and it would be very interesting to inquire as to what part Hus himself played as a writer of hymns. This is still a matter of controversy, and Dr. Nejedly, our principal authority on the subject, refuses to express a final opinion. Many of the early hymns are the work of unknown writers, and a large number of these were attributed to Hus, particularly in the hymn-books of the community of the Bohemian brethren,[2] who considered themselves the true disciples and successors of Hus. Brother Blahoslav,[3] born in 1523, mentions as undoubted works of Hus only two hymns, those entitled, "Jesus Christ, bountiful Lord" and "O living bread of angels." Later writers attributed to Hus an ever-increasing number of hymns. There is great probability that at least six of these devotional songs are genuine works of Hus. Hus's love of singing did not forsake him to the last. As previously mentioned, it was while singing a hymn that he ended his life in the flames.

[1] See my *History of Bohemian Literature*, p. 151. Writing for English readers I do not think it necessary to give the Bohemian names of these hymns.

[2] See my *History of Bohemian Literature*, p. 249.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 232-241.

Hus's patriotic efforts to increase the power and importance of his country induced him to endeavour, as far as circumstances permitted, to establish relations with foreign countries. As regards this subject, also, our materials are scant. The racial hatred between Slav and Teuton rendered amicable intercourse with Germany impossible at Hus's time, though a century later the German reformation undoubtedly caused religious sympathy for a time to prevail over racial antipathy. The Bohemians were, on the other hand, greatly influenced and attracted by the Wycliffite movement in England. The fact that King Richard II. had married a Bohemian princess, the daughter of Charles IV., undoubtedly led to considerable intercourse between England and Bohemia. Though the influence of Wycliffe on Hus was not so great, and particularly not so exclusive, as has recently been affirmed, its existence cannot be denied. Hus's reference to " blessed England " when informing the Bethlehem congregation of the message of Richard Wiche has already been mentioned here. There is also no reason to doubt the assertion of a recent Bohemian writer [1] that Hus wrote to Lord Cobham begging him to send him copies of Wycliffe's writings.[2]

The purely theological intercourse between England and Bohemia led to no political consequences, even at a period when religious and political controversy were more closely connected than is the case at the present day. Hus's relations with the Slavic countries had, on the other hand, political results, which influenced even the period subsequent to the death of the Bohemian reformer. The prominent part played in the Hussite wars by the Poles and particularly by the princes of the reigning family of Poland is foreshadowed by the hitherto little known relations which Hus established with

[1] Dr. Nedoma, *A Hussite codex of Stara Boleslav* [Alt Bunzlau]. (*Proceedings* of the Bohemian Society of Sciences, 1891.)

[2] The statement is confirmed by English writers: " The Lord Cobham is said likewise . . . at the desire of John Huss to have caused all Wiclif's works to be written out and to be dispersed in Bohemia." (John Lewis, *The Life of Dr. John Wiclif*, 1820, p. 247.)

King Vladislav of Poland. The Polish king was then engaged in war with the knights of the Teutonic order—one of the many episodes of the eternal conflict between Slav and Teuton. Many Bohemians, among them, according to an ancient tradition, John Zizka, subsequently the hero of the Hussite wars, joined, as volunteers, the army of the kindred Polish nation. The war was, of course, watched with the greatest interest by the Bohemians. In 1410, the King of Poland obtained a decisive victory at Tannenberg over the army of the Teutonic order which broke its strength for all times. On receiving the news of the great victory, Hus addressed to the king a congratulatory letter, which has recently been published [1] and is of the greatest interest. According to Dr. Nedoma's conjecture, Ones of Hurka, mentioned in this letter, was an envoy sent by the King of Poland to Hus to inform him of the great victory. We have evidence that King Vladislav sent messengers of victory not only to all sovereigns, but also to men of importance in Bohemia.[2] It is a proof that the fame of Hus was already widely spread in Slavic countries that such a messenger should have been sent to him as the leader of the national party in Bohemia. The members of that party naturally rejoiced greatly over what they consider a victory of the Slavic cause. It is interesting to note that Hus here refers to his wish to meet the king and to visit Poland —no doubt in the interest of church-reform. It appears from a remark of the Emperor Sigismund, previously quoted,[3] that that movement had acquired considerable strength in Poland. This planned journey of Hus was hitherto quite unknown. Both in this letter, and in a second one which will be quoted presently, Hus, acting truly as a peacemaker, entreats the King of Poland to live on good terms with Sigismund of Hun-

[1] By Dr. Nedoma in the *Proceedings of Bohemian Society of Sciences* for 1891. The letter also formed part of the codex of Stara Boleslav which has already been mentioned.

[2] Such a letter, addressed to Lord Henry of Rosenberg is published—in a German translation—by Pubitschka. (*Chronologische Geschichte Böhmens*, vol. vii. p. 34.)

[3] See p. 259.

gary, though the cautious reference to his arrogance proves that Hus was by no means unacquainted with the true character of that prince. Hus writes: "Greetings and thanks, peace and victory from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ! Most illustrious prince and magnificent king! When Ones of Hurka, your Majesty's messenger of victory and of praiseworthy agreement,[1] brought certain news, he gave my heart such joy that neither can my pen describe it, nor my voice express it, as would be seemly. I know, however, most Christian king, that not the power of your magnificence, but that of the supreme King, the peaceful Lord Jesus Christ, humiliated the proud enemies and rivals of your glory. He powerfully expelled them from the seat of glory and exalted the humble; therefore should both (adversaries), having before their eyes the power of the peaceful King, tremble and in their peril invoke His aid, and know that there is no victory but through Him, whom no mortal can defeat and who is pleased to grant victory to the humble, and because of their humiliation finally to exalt them. He (Jesus Christ) taught us this, saying frequently: 'All who exalt themselves shall be humiliated, and those who humiliate themselves shall be exalted.' Both things have been fulfilled. Where are now the two swords [2] of the enemies? Verily have they been struck down by those (swords) by which they endeavoured to terrify the humble. They directed the two (swords) at kindness and at pride, and behold they lost many thousands struck down unexpectedly. Where are now their swords, their war steeds, their mailed men, their warriors in whom they confided? Where their innumerable florins or treasures? Assuredly everything failed them. Proud men, they who confided not in Christ, did not believe that they would be deceived. Therefore, most

[1] This probably refers to a truce between the Poles and Germans immediately after the battle. Peace was only concluded on February 1, 1411.

[2] On the eve of the battle the grandmaster of the Teutonic order, Conrad of Juningen, sent in derision two swords to the Polish camp, implying that the Poles were insufficiently armed.

illustrious prince, wisely bearing this in your mind, adhere to humility, for it exalts. Follow the example of the peaceful King, the Lord Jesus Christ, strive for peace with that illustrious prince, King Sigismund, and should he in his arrogance raise unjust claims—may God avert this!—let your Majesty preserve the moderation of humility, lest Christian blood be again spilt, and great harm to the souls befall. But I, unworthy servant of Christ, with the whole people, will not cease humbly to invoke the grace of God on this concord, praying that the most kind Lord may deign to grant it. I also, O magnificent king, wish from the depth of my heart to behold you in person, and I hope that the Lord Jesus Christ will deign to grant me this, if He knows that it will in some fashion be of advantage to your Majesty and to my preaching. May the Almighty God deign to assist your Majesty for (the sake of) our Saviour, the mediator between God and men, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

This letter is undated, but we may consider it certain that it was written in 1410, later than the 15th of July, the day on which the battle of Tannenberg was fought. On February 1, 1411, King Vladislav concluded a treaty of peace with the Teutonic order. His principal motive was that, shortly before, King Sigismund of Hungary had attacked Poland. Hus was therefore not successful in his attempt to prevent hostilities between the two kings.

The only other letter of Hus to the King of Poland that is known was written two years later. It is dated June 10, 1412. It is closely connected with the previous letter, for Hus begins by expressing his joy over the re-establishment of peace between the King and Sigismund of Hungary. Hus, however, expresses in this letter more clearly than in the former one his hopes with regard to church-reform. He lays particular stress on the suppression of simony, which he very truly considered the real cause of the depravation of the clergy. A priest who had often for a very high price purchased his ecclesiastical

dignity by no means felt obliged to conform to rules laid down by men whom he no doubt despised as absurd pietists and fanatics. Hus firmly believed that simony was the principal source of the evil condition of the church in his time. He writes to the King of Poland:[1] "The grace of the Saviour Jesus Christ (assist you) to rule your people and to attain a life of glory. Most serene prince, I was filled with great pleasure when I heard that your serene Highness had, by the will of the Almighty Lord, come to an agreement with that illustrious prince, King Sigismund, and I only pray with the people that the life of you both and of your peoples may continue in the path of justice. Therefore, most illustrious prince, it appears most necessary in the interest both of your Majesty and of his Highness King Sigismund and also of the other princes that the heresy of simony be removed from your dominions. But can I expect its extermination while the poison has spread so widely that hardly anywhere can a priesthood or a people be found that is not tainted by the heresy of simony? Who then confers a bishopric, purely for the honour of God, the salvation of the people, and his own salvation? Who also, considering only these three motives, accepts a bishopric, parsonage, or any other benefice? I wish there were many who did not accept them merely from servility, or to curry favour with men. Is not thus fulfilled the word of Jeremiah, who said: 'From the smallest to the greatest of them, all pursue avarice, and from the prophet to the priest, all practise deceit'? And was the disciple of Christ mistaken when he said: 'All seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's'?[2] We hear the voice of the church, which moans because the gold has been obscured and the finest of colours changed; for the priesthood formerly, as gold made brilliant by fire and whitened by virtue, has now become polluted and obscured, as saith St. Bernard. Fulfilled is the

[1] Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 31-32.
[2] St. Paul to the Philippians ii. 21.

word of our Saviour: Iniquity will abound and love will wax cold among the people. Woe, then, on him who at this time does not mourn. Hearing these my words, most illustrious prince, the simoniacal, ostentatious, luxurious, and unrestrained priesthood attacks me before the people by disparaging me, and declaring me a heretic. Should I then be silent? Woe on me, if I were silent! It is better for me to die than not to oppose such wickedness, for then should I also be a participator in their (the simonists') crimes, and deserve hell, as they do. From this may the King of glory preserve your Majesty, who rules holily over your people."

These valuable letters prove that it was Hus who at this period first established amicable relations between the two kindred Slavic countries, Bohemia and Poland, hoping that they would jointly destroy simony and the other terrible evils from which the church then suffered. At the Council of Constance the ambassadors of King Vladislav endeavoured, as far as their diplomatic position allowed them to do so, to save Hus. Vladislav continued to be on terms of friendship with the Bohemian church-reformers, who at one time even offered him the Bohemian crown.

## CHAPTER X

### THE WRITINGS OF HUS—PORTRAITS OF HUS

In distinction from many writers on Hus, I have in this work frequently referred to the writings of the master—both Latin and Bohemian, and quoted them largely. These writings alone enable us to thoroughly conceive the real nature of Hus, who was entirely guided by religious and national enthusiasm, while the minutiae of mediæval theological controversy did not greatly appeal to him. If he none the less became a skilful scholastic dialectician who at Constance was able to hold his own against very learned accusers, the reason is that such skill was for him a necessity. At a period when politics and religion were closely connected, the accusation of heresy was the most deadly arm that could be used to destroy an opponent. It was certain that those who disapproved of Hus's endeavours to reform the Bohemian Church and to raise the Bohemian nation to a higher political and intellectual level would attempt to declare him a heretic. While some of the Latin works, particularly the *Super IV. Sententiarum*, bear witness to Hus's erudition, his true nature appears to us more clearly in the works which he composed in his own language. His Bohemian letters, though known in England and France only in second-hand translations, have long been read with interest, and I have in this work quoted largely the equally valuable *Postilla* and the *Expositions* (*Vyklady*). It will, therefore, be sufficient briefly to outline here the general complex of the writings of Hus. This, still a difficult task, would have been almost impossible before the appearance of Dr. Flajshans's valuable bibliographical work.[1] Many writings

[1] *Literarni cinnost mistra Jana Husi* (Literary Activity of Master John Hus), 1900.

formerly attributed to Hus really had as authors Matthew of Janov, Wycliffe, Chelcicky, and others. On the other hand, many authentic works of Hus disappeared during the so-called "Catholic reformation" which began after the battle of the White Mountain in 1620. The Jesuits were entrusted with the task of discovering and destroying every book that had not been sanctioned by the Church of Rome. The possession of such a book became a crime, punishable by death.[1] It is, therefore, probable that some works of Hus have altogether perished, while others have only recently been rediscovered and published. Though, therefore, even the latest bibliographical study of Hus, that of Dr. Flajshans, can lay no claim to completeness, attempts were made from a very early period to collect the scattered writings of the master and classify them. The first attempts to do so, however, extended only to the so-called writings of Constance, mainly letters to friends that were written by Hus in prison. The trusty disciple and companion of Hus, Peter Mladenovic, tells us that he preserved copies of the writings of the master, and he gives us some slight information as to what these writings were. Lawrence of Brezova[2] gives us somewhat more extensive information and states that Hus, besides numerous letters, wrote several small treatises while in prison.[3] These writers wrote immediately after the death of Hus, but somewhat later the tradition became more obscure. While, as Dr. Flajshans conjectures, some works of Hus were at this early period already definitely lost, works of other writers soon

[1] As late as in 1755 a Bohemian forester named Thomas Svoboda was sentenced to death at the stake because he had been found in possession of a Bible. By an act of grace he was strangled before being burnt.

[2] See my *Lectures on the Historians of Bohemia*, pp. 35-47.

[3] "In ipsa ergo captivitate Magister Johannes Hus virilem habens animum mori potius eligebat quam cleri pestiferi scelerum enormitates approbare, multasque epistolas et scripta utilissima occulte suis scribebat amicis . . . ad vota amicorum et aliquorum carceris custodum tractatus pulcerrimos . . . edidit puta de mandatis dei et oracione dominica, item qualiter committitur peccatum mortale, item de cognicione dei, item de tribus hostibus hominis. . . . Scripsit quoque tractatulum de communione utriusque speciei." (Laurentii de Brezova, *Historia Hussitica*, ed. Goll, pp. 332-333.)

began to be attributed to him. Books written by Peter Chelcicky,[1] whose views certainly in many respects resemble those of Hus, were supposed to be the work of the originator of Bohemian church-reform, and in the hymn-books of the community of the Bohemian brethren,[2] who considered themselves the truest continuators of the work of Hus, numerous hymns by other writers were attributed to the master. Later on, the greater the fame of Hus became the more devotional works were ascribed to him. When the Roman creeds had been forcibly re-established in Bohemia it was endeavoured by all means to blacken the memory of the church-reformer. For that purpose, several writings containing extreme views were wrongly attributed to him.[3]

It is a proof of the great fame of Hus that some of his writings were among the earliest of printed works. The earliest printed work of Hus of which we know the existence, though no copy has been preserved, was a small treatise entitled *Gesta Christi*. In 1459 two and in 1495 four of the letters from Constance were printed. The quaint *Book against the Priest Kitchen-master* was first printed at Litomysl in 1509. Of the last-named work a unique copy is preserved in the library of the Bohemian museum; of the others little is known except the fact that they existed. Martin Luther, who always considered the Bohemian reformer as his forerunner, in 1536 published at Wittenberg a translation of four of Hus's Bohemian letters; among them was the famed "Letter to the Whole Bohemian Nation." The translation was in German and Latin. A year later a larger collection of Hus's letters was printed under the influence of Luther, who wrote an introduction.[4] The best early editions of Hus's works,

[1] See my *History of Bohemian Literature*, pp. 153-171.

[2] See Chapter IX.

[3] It is probable that this occurred even much earlier. Thus John Stokes at the Council of Constance referred to a treatise which had been shown to him at Prague as a work of Hus. Hus had no connection whatever with this treatise.

[4] This introduction was reprinted with the editions of the Latin works published in 1558 and 1715.

though they are incomplete and, on the other hand, included many writings that are not by the master, are those published at Nuremberg. The Bohemian works were printed in 1563 and in 1592, the Latin ones in 1558 and again in 1715.[1] These editions for many years were the standard ones, and the one containing the Latin works has not been superseded up to the present day. During the period of Bohemian independence the Bohemian works of the master were frequently reprinted; this applies particularly to the *Postilla*, of which an edition was published at Nuremberg in 1563, and another at Prague by the celebrated printer Melantrich in 1564. The latter edition, which is illustrated, contains, besides the *Postilla*, several of Hus's letters, which have always been very popular. After the year 1620 such publications necessarily ceased. When the Bohemians in the latter part of the eighteenth century again obtained a limited amount of religious freedom, their thoughts again turned to Hus. Joseph Dobrovsky,[2] in his history of the Bohemian language and literature, is the first Bohemian writer who again ventured to mention Hus. In the third edition of his work, to which I have just referred, he gives a list of the writings of Hus, which is principally interesting as proving how very limited was the number of works of Hus that were known at that time. Dobrovsky in this work also gives short extracts from some of Hus's writings. Joseph Jungmann, in his history of Bohemian literature was already able to enumerate a considerably larger number of works of Hus. To no other Bohemian writer of the nineteenth century is the memory of Hus so greatly indebted as to Francis Palacky.[3] His history of Bohemia, founded on almost unknown documents, revealed the great Bohemian as he really was. In his extensive collection of documents concerning Hus published in 1869, Palacky has printed the fullest and

[1] I have used the edition of 1715 when quoting Hus's Latin works.
[2] b. 1753—1829. See my *History of Bohemian Literature*, pp. 359-362.
[3] *Ibid.* pp. 388-403.

most correct version of Hus's letters, both Bohemian and Latin, which exists. Professor Höfler, in his *Geschichtschreiber der Hussitischen Bewegung*, has also published a considerable number of letters of Hus. Dr. Höfler's superficiality, his very slight knowledge of the Bohemian language, and his fanatical hatred of church-reform and the Bohemian nation, render it necessary to use his works with great caution. A large number of Hus's letters, among them some not contained in Palacky's collection, were published by Mr. Bohumil Mares in 1891. The Latin letters, however, appear only in a Bohemian translation. Karel Jaromir Erben, in his edition of Bohemian works of Hus, which will be mentioned presently, has included fifteen Bohemian letters of the master. Some of the letters were translated into English by the late Rev. A. Wratislaw, who was acquainted with the Bohemian language, and I have translated a few in my previous writings. I have done so on a larger scale in the present work. Hus's letters have also been translated into English by Mr. Mackenzie, who used the French version of M. de Bonnechose, and by Mr. Workman, who for the Bohemian letters used the Latin translation of Professor Kvicala, as well as the not always trustworthy German translation of Professor Höfler.

Though the letters have remained and perhaps always will remain the work of Hus that has most admirers, other works of the master were also again published in the nineteenth century. This task was not always an easy one. Though the Austrian government no longer attempted entirely to suppress all memory of Hus among the people, the absolutist authorities of Vienna still viewed with marked displeasure all mention, and particularly all praise of Hus. As late as in 1857 the celebrated Bohemian philologist, Safarik,[1] wrote to the Russian scholar Pogodin: "Nobody here dares to edit Hus's works, writings against Hus would be more in request. Let the dead repose. Hus *ne nominetur quidem, aut uratur*

[1] See my *History of Bohemian Literature*, pp. 383-387.

*denuo!*" The editors of Hus's writings had also up to 1848 to face the perils of a double censorship.[1] Of the two censors one investigated whether a book contained anything opposed to the policy of the government, while the other, an ecclesiastic, suppressed everything antagonistic to the Church of Rome. In spite of these obstacles Venceslas Hanka[2] published in 1825 an edition of the *Dcerka* (daughter), one of Hus's best works. The edition is not, however, complete, as several passages were omitted by order of the censor. In the years 1864 to 1868 Karel Jaromir Erben published three large volumes containing the principal Bohemian works of Hus, such as the *Postilla*, the different expositions (*Vyklady*), the treatise on simony (*Svatokupector*), the *Dcerka*, some of the Bohemian letters, and a large number of other treatises. This has remained and probably will long remain the standard edition of the Bohemian works of the master, and it is therefore to be all the more to be regretted that though censorship had then already been nominally suppressed, some passages in this work were altered, others suppressed by order of the government. Several Bohemian works of Hus have been newly edited and published within the last years. Thus Dr. Flajshans, the foremost authority on Hus at the present time, published in 1900 a very handsome illustrated edition of the *Postilla*. Dr. Flajshans has very skilfully modernised the language, thus rendering the valuable book more accessible to scholars unacquainted with the Bohemian of the fifteenth century. In 1907 Dr. Novotny published a small edition of the treatise on Simony, which has very useful notes. The Latin works of Hus have also not been entirely neglected within the last years. Under the patronage of the Bohemian Academy the publication of the Latin works in a new edition has been begun, and it is sincerely to be hoped that this undertaking will meet with the success which it fully deserves. The

[1] See my *History of Bohemian Literature*, pp. 366-367 and 396-398.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 403-404.

editors decided wisely not to begin their publication with the one or two Latin works that have hitherto been almost exclusively known, and have indeed already included two or three works of Hus that had never previously been printed. The works already published are the *Expositura Decalogi*, *De Corpore Christi*, *De Sanguine Christi*, *Super IV. Sententiarum*, and the *Sermones de Sanctis*. The last-named work, just printed for the first time, contains, as Dr. Flajshans the editor writes, a collection of sermons of unequal value. Some are Hus's own, while others are merely copies from the writings of St. Chrysostomus and St. Bernard.

It will be seen from what I have written that the works of Hus have been greatly neglected, if we consider the world-wide importance of the master. Even now it is impossible to state with certainty the number of genuine works of Hus that have been preserved. Josef Jungmann, writing about the year 1840, enumerates thirty-eight Bohemian works of the master. Jungmann, whose book treated of Bohemian literature, makes no reference to Latin works. Dr. Flajshans, whose work which I have frequently quoted supersedes Jungmann's and all other earlier bibliographical attempts, enumerates seventy-four Latin, one German, and thirty-six Bohemian works of Hus.[1] The ancient traditions, which saw in Hus only the adversary of the Roman Church, which he became by the force of circumstances, by no means by his own wish, attributed all his numerous works to the last troubled years of his life. This, as previously noted, is quite untrue. Dr. Flajshans has for the first time seriously attempted to establish at least approximately the dates of the principal writings of Hus. Certainty, as the learned professor remarks, is very often not obtainable. The entire obscurity which surrounded all the master's works renders research very difficult. Dr. Flajshans divides all Hus's works, both Bohemian and

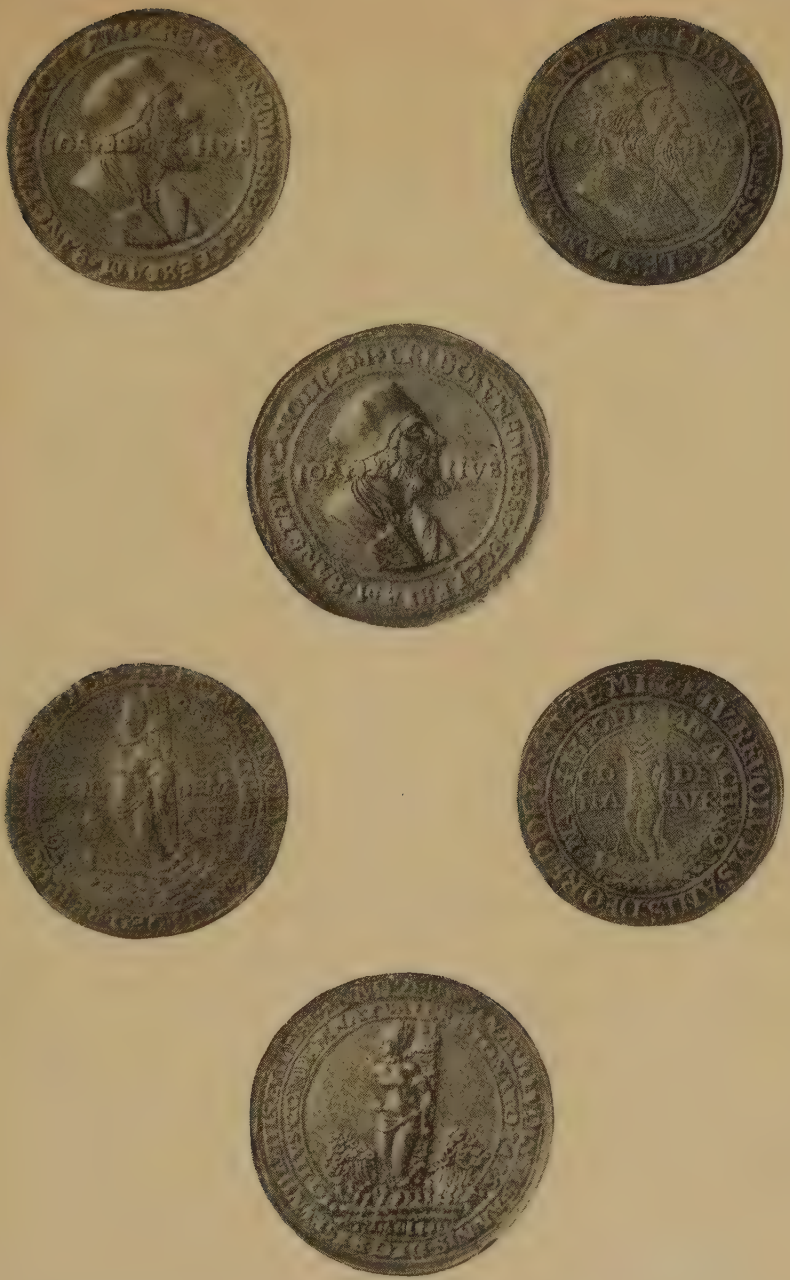
[1] I do not enter here into the difficult question of the manuscripts of Hus. Dr. Flajshans has written fully and clearly on this subject.

Latin, into four periods. The first period, which Dr. Flajshans calls the academic one, extends from the year 1402 to 1409. To these peaceful years, during which Hus was not yet in conflict with the Church of Rome, belongs the master's most important Latin work, the treatise *Super IV. Sententiarum.* Other Latin works of this period are the treatises *De Corpore Christi* and *De Sanguine Christi.* A large number of sermons also belong to this period, as well as, probably, the hymns attributed to Hus. To this period belong also the synodal sermons (charges) delivered by Hus by order of Archbishop Zajic of Hasenburg. The second period, comprising the years 1409 to 1411, is by Dr. Flajshans called the polemical one, and he has thus generally indicated the purpose of many of these works. Among them are the treatises *Contra Anglicum Joh. Stokes, Contra occultum adversarium,* Hus's defence against the accusation of having driven the German students from Prague.[1] Other works of this period are the *Orthographia Bohemica* and the *Expositio Decalogi,* which has recently been printed for the first time. The third period, called by Dr. Flajshans the apostolic one (1412-1414), comprises the time from the beginning of Hus's exile from Prague to his departure on his fateful journey to Constance. Most of the important works of the master, both Bohemian and Latin, belong to this period. Among these are many of the dogmatic works, in which Hus's opposition to the Roman see is more marked than in the earlier ones. Many of the writings of the apostolic period have previously been mentioned in this work, and it will here be sufficient to enumerate a few of those that have most importance. Of the Bohemian works the treatise on *Simony,* the *Dcerka* (daughter), the five *Vyklady* (expositions) of the faith, the ten commandments and the Lord's prayer, and the *Postilla*—Hus's greatest work in his own

[1] The full Latin title of the treatise runs thus: "M. J. Hus literis publicis diluit crimen falso sibi objectum quod Germanos ex universitate studii Pragensis expulerit." The manuscript is in a very imperfect state.

language—should be mentioned. Of Latin works the treatise *De Ecclesia*, one of Hus's best known but least original books, belongs to this time. Though Dr. Flajshans has named this period the apostolic one in distinction from the previous polemical one, controversial writings abound at this period also. Hus, indeed, "was ever a fighter." Of such controversial writings the treatises *Contra Palec, Contra Stanislaum de Znoyma, Contra octo doctores, Contra praedicatorem Plznensem* are the most important. The last period, which Dr. Flajshans has not very felicitiously called the apologetic one, comprises the time from Hus's departure for Constance to his death. This period is naturally not fertile in literary productions; but it is to this period that belong the *Constance Letters*, the most precious memorial of Hus that we possess.

As is proved by contemporary writings, the tragical death, or as the Bohemians deemed it, the martyrdom of Hus, was immediately considered an event of the highest importance in all Europe. The subsequent Hussite wars, in which almost the whole of Europe was arrayed against Bohemia, naturally spread the fame of the master yet further. Portraits of Hus must, therefore, have been numerous from an early time. It is none the less certain that no existent portrait can lay claim to be an authentic representation of the Bohemian reformer. It is needless to say that the many portraits of the master which have appeared almost continuously since his death have great historical interest. In Bohemia, where everything connected with Hus is still a matter of the greatest interest, a considerable literature on the subject of Hus's appearance has recently sprung up. It is here sufficient to state that the portraits of Hus belong to two types that are entirely different. Generally, though not absolutely, it may be stated that the older portraits represent Hus beardless, and the newer ones with a large beard. The oldest representations are found in the illustrated editions of Richenthal's chronicle, and they represent Hus as being without a beard. It is, however, obvious



MEDALS OF HUS FROM THE COLLECTION IN THE MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF PRAGUE AND IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF BOHEMIA

from the drawing of these illustrations that they did not attempt seriously to portray Hus. Very many other later representations of a beardless Hus have been preserved. We find several such representations in a hymn-book preserved in the town of Litomerice.[1] They represent, however, a very young man, and have a very conventional character.[2] The numerous medals of Hus which have been preserved represent both types, and we find even medals that had a beardless Hus on one side, and a bearded one—generally represented as bound to the stake—on the other. Of the later beardless representations of Hus the one contained in the edition of the *Postilla* of 1563 is undoubtedly the best. In the course of the sixteenth century the bearded representations of Hus, now so familiar to all, took the place of the earlier type. The general acceptation of the new type at a time when traditions concerning the appearance of Hus must still have been widely spread, rather militates against the assurance with which some recent writers have declared in favour of a beardless Hus. It is certain that Hus grew a beard while in prison, and after a short stay in the cathedral he was immediately led to the stake on the fatal 6th of July. That he was shaved immediately before his degradation from priesthood that he might present the appearance of a secular priest, as secular priests were then beardless, is a conjecture for which I can find no evidence. The faithful Mladenovic would certainly have mentioned such an occurrence. The portrait of Hus without a beard may also have been drawn in accordance with the memory of those who had known Hus as a young man. Those which I have seen certainly do not present the appearance of a man over forty whom illness and anxiety had certainly aged. It is perhaps in this case wise not to seek for certainty where none can be found. Of the countless

[1] In German, Leitmeritz.

[2] Messrs. Faber and Kurth have reproduced these miniatures in their otherwise valueless study entitled: "Wie sah Hus aus."

paintings and statues of Hus which we possess, the great majority represent the master bearded, and this type has, rightly or wrongly, been generally accepted. One of the noblest of these portraits is the—probably slightly idealised—one which is preserved at Herrenhut, the present centre of the community of the Bohemian brethren. The fact that the brethren consider themselves the true followers of Hus adds to the value of the portrait, which has been reproduced in this work. According to a very ancient tradition in Bohemia, the numerous statues of Hus that existed there were by order of the Jesuits declared to be representations of that somewhat dubious saint, John of Nepomuk, and have thus been preserved.[1] These statues, which every traveller in Bohemia will remember to have seen, certainly bear a striking likeness to the representations of the bearded Hus. The same type has been adopted for the statue of Hus, which forms part of the Luther monument at Worms, and for the painting of Hus before the Council by the Bohemian painter Brozik, which now adorns the town hall of Prague. The same can be said of the many other modern pictures representing Hus.

[1] It should be stated that Professor Kalousek, one of the most eminent of the Bohemian historians of the present day, totally denies the authenticity of this tradition.

# CHAPTER XI

## JEROME OF PRAGUE

In all early accounts of the life of Hus we find in close connection with the name of the master that of Jerome of Prague. I have in former works[1] pointed out that the importance of Jerome as a Bohemian church-reformer has been greatly exaggerated. His connection with Hus was neither as close, nor as constant as was formerly believed. This is indeed natural, as Jerome was frequently absent from Bohemia for considerable periods during the last and most eventful years of the life of Hus. The career of Jerome contrasts in many ways with that of Hus. While the latter hardly ever left Bohemia before he undertook his fateful journey to Constance, Jerome led a roving life, never remaining long in one country, and sometimes departing in a manner that cannot be called honourable. There can be few greater contrasts than that between the saintly and truly evangelical simplicity of the character of Hus, and the sophistical insincerity of Jerome, who represents an early type of the humanist—with all the qualities and also all the faults that characterise the humanist. It is as a humanist also that he appealed to Poggio Bracciolini, whose letter to Bruni (Leonardo Aretino) describing the death of Jerome of Prague is one of the few documents connected with the Bohemian reformation which have become somewhat widely known. It is certain that Jerome was a man of great erudition, and the not very numerous contemporary notices referring to him lay great stress on his eloquence. On one occasion, when both he and Hus took part in one of the many

[1] *Bohemia, a Historical Sketch*, pp. 137, 138, and *A History of Bohemian Literature*, p. 141.

disputations then customary at the University of Prague, Jerome's speech quite outbalanced that of the greater man, and the enthusiastic young students conducted him home in triumph. Jerome's inflammatory language was undoubtedly harmful to the cause of church-reform, as well as to Hus, whom many even at that time identified with the views of Jerome. Probably not unaware of this, Hus, when leaving for Constance, begged Jerome not to follow him there—a prayer that remained unnoticed by the latter.

Very little is known of the early years of Jerome. He is stated, though on no very certain authority, to have been of noble birth, and was probably somewhat younger than Hus. The frequently repeated statement that his family name was "Faulfiss" is founded on a passage of Ænæas Sylvius's *Historia Bohemica*, which was misunderstood. Ænæas Sylvius mentions[1] among the Bohemian church-reformers a man *genere nobilis, ex domo quam Putridi Piscis vocant.* This was formerly erroneously believed to refer to Jerome. After beginning his studies at the University of Prague, where he did not attempt to obtain any ecclesiastical rank, Jerome proceeded to Oxford in 1398. He here zealously studied the works of Wycliffe, which greatly impressed him, and he made copies of the *Dialogus* and *Trialogus*. Always inclined to a roving life, Jerome did not remain long in England. He next visited Paris, and for some time pursued his studies at the university there. Here his outspoken advocacy of the views of Wycliffe already began to attract public attention, and he incurred the displeasure of Gerson, then rector of the university. It may here be noted that in distinction from Hus, who mainly strove to reform the clergy and laity of Bohemia and to lead them to a truly Christian life, Jerome delighted in the sophistical subtility that was fashionable among the theologians and other scholars of his age. A very vain man, Jerome probably rejoiced in the notoriety which he

[1] *Aeneae Silvii Historia Bohemica*, chap. xxxv.

obtained in Paris. Yet he did not remain long in that city. Under what circumstances Jerome left Paris is not clearly known, and it should be stated that little is known of most of the events of his life. The friends of church-reform revered in him one who had had the honour of obtaining the friendship of Hus, and who at the end of his life met his doom bravely. They therefore preferred to palliate some not very creditable incidents in his life. The partisans of Rome, on the other hand, directed their attacks rather against Hus, whose truly saintly life rendered him a far more dangerous adversary than Jerome. It appears certain that from Paris Jerome proceeded to Köln—then a university town—and afterwards to Heidelberg. In 1403 he is stated to have visited Jerusalem. It is at any rate certain that he returned to Prague in 1407. He there immediately took part in the theological controversies that were then raging at the university. When, in 1408, a French embassy arrived at Kutna Hora,[1] then the residence of King Venceslas, and proposed that the papal schism should be terminated by the refusal of the temporal sovereigns to recognise in future either of the rival pontiffs, Venceslas summoned to Kutna Hora the most prominent members of the university, wishing to consult them. Among those summoned were Hus and Jerome. All the Bohemian magisters spoke strongly in favour of the French proposal, while the German members of the university strongly affirmed their allegiance to the Roman pontiff Gregory XII. The Bohemian magisters believed that they would be graciously received by the king, who was known to be favourable to the French proposals. The astute German rector of the university, Henning von Baltenhagen, however, diverted the king's attention from the question of the schism, and denounced the Bohemian members of the university as men who held heretical opinions. The king became greatly incensed and threatened with death at the stake Hus and Jerome, who

[1] In German, Kuttenberg.

had acted as leaders of the Bohemian magisters.[1] As has been previously stated, the king soon changed his views and again became favourable to the party of church-reform. The antagonism between that party and the Archbishop of Prague, however, continued. Jerome continued to uphold his views with great violence, and here as in so many cases his attitude was injurious to the party of church-reform. It was probably in consequence of his violence that Jerome thought it advisable again to leave Prague in 1410. He resumed his wandering life, and appears first to have visited at Ofen the court of Sigismund, King of Hungary, and afterwards German emperor. Jerome, whose self-confidence—to put it mildly—was very great, appears in Hungary to have exercised the ecclesiastical functions, though he had never been ordained as a priest. It is certain that he preached before King Sigismund in the royal chapel at Ofen and violently denounced the rapacity of the clergy. He was not able, however, to remain long safely in Hungary. The Archbishop of Prague wrote to Sigismund denouncing Jerome as a heretic and adherent of Wycliffe. Jerome was imprisoned for a short time, but soon allowed to leave Hungary. After having perhaps again spent a short time at Prague—authentic evidence concerning Jerome's many travels and adventures is very scant—he appeared in Vienna. He began lecturing at the university, and here also his eloquence attracted large audiences. His praise of Wycliffe, however, very soon again brought him into conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities. Representatives of the Bishop of Passau, to whose diocese Vienna then belonged, summoned Jerome before them and cautioned him. Jerome protested against the accusation of having spread heretical opinions, and declared himself ready to clear himself before an ecclesiastical tribunal that was to meet for the purpose of hearing his defence. Meanwhile, he promised on his oath not to leave Vienna without the permission of the eccle-

[1] See Chapter IV.

siastical authorities.[1] Jerome, however, succeeded in escaping secretly from Vienna, and sought safety in the castle of Vöttau in Moravia, which belonged to Lord John of Lichtenburg, an adherent of the cause of church-reform. From here he addressed to one of the priests at Vienna, to whom he had pledged his word that he would not leave that city, a letter that was certainly audacious, and that some writers have not hesitated to describe as impudent.[2] He declared that he was sure that the priest—whose name is not given—and his colleagues would excuse him for not heeding a promise which had been extorted, if they rightly considered the circumstances. He then proceeded to inform the priest, who was rector of the town of Laa in Austria, that he had on his journey visited his (the rector's) church, accompanied by the schoolmaster and the town secretary, and ended by assuring him and his colleagues that he was ready to render them any service in his power. In consequence of his flight from Vienna, the representatives of the Bishop of Passau in that city pronounced the penalty of excommunication against Jerome.[3]

The seclusion of the castle of Vöttau soon became distasteful to the restless mind of Jerome, and we soon again find him in Prague. In the discussion that arose there in 1412 concerning the sale of indulgences,[4] Jerome took a prominent part. His speeches at the university obtained great success, particularly among the younger students. Shortly afterwards Jerome again thought it advisable to leave Prague in consequence of his participation in the foolish buffoonery organised by Lord Vok of Valdstyn. He now proceeded to Poland—it is said on the invitation of King Vladislav. His courtly manners, his striking appearance, and his great eloquence here also won him many friends, but he here also incurred the

[1] "De non recedendo de Vienna sine nostra licentia speciali praestitit juramentum" (Letter of Andrew of Grillenberg, Canon of Passau, to Archbishop Zbynek of Prague. Palacky, *Documenta*).

[2] Printed by Von der Hardt, T. iv. p. 683.

[3] This document is printed in an abridged form by Palacky, *Documenta*.

[4] See Chapter V.

hostility of the Roman Church. He was particularly blamed for associating with Ruthenians, who were members of the Eastern Church. When the Bishop of Vilna expressed his disapproval Jerome declared that the schismatics and Ruthenians were good Christians, and he continued to assist at the services of the Greek Church.[1] During his stay in Northern Europe, Jerome received the news that Hus had been summoned to appear before the council at Constance He wrote to him advising him to do so, and added that he would himself proceed to Constance to assist Hus. A man of a vain and rather theatrical nature such as was Jerome felt tempted to appear before the council, where he would meet all the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries, and representatives of all the temporal sovereigns and universities of Europe. Hus vainly endeavoured to dissuade Jerome from coming to Constance; he none the less arrived there on April 14, 1415. Hus was at that time imprisoned at Gottlieben, but the Bohemian nobles who had accompanied him warned Jerome of the great danger which he encountered by remaining in the city. Jerome immediately decided to escape secretly from Constance,[2] and to return to Bohemia. He had already arrived at Hirschau, only twenty-five miles from the Bohemian frontier, when he was arrested by the Count Palatine John, who, acting under the orders of the Emperor Sigismund, conveyed him in fetters to Constance. He arrived there on May 23, and was immediately imprisoned. Hus appears to have been informed of these events, and though, speaking generally, he did not often allude to Jerome, he mentioned him several

[1] Great stress was laid on this accusation at Jerome's trial at Constance. In the act of accusation—printed by Von der Hardt, T. iv. p. 679—it is stated: (Jerome) "dixit expresse quod praedicti schismatici et Rutheni essent boni Christiani. Quodque idem Dominus Episcopus eidem Hieronymo in faciem suam tunc restitit dicens: Quod non diceret eos esse bonos Christianos. Ipse vero Hieronymus in eisdem suis erroribus permansit eosdem Ruthenos et fidem ipsorum perversam approbando."

[2] It is this secret escape of Jerome from Constance which undoubtedly supplied Richenthal with a foundation for his totally untrue tale that Hus had attempted to escape from Constance in disguise.

times in his last letters from prison. In a Bohemian letter, dated June 27, Hus writes with touching humility: "I will tell you that the Lord God knows why He defers my death and that of my dear brother, master Jerome; with regard to him, I hope that he will die holily and guiltlessly, and that he will bear himself and suffer more bravely than I, faint-hearted sinner that I am."[1]

Hus was too holy and too saintly a man to be a good judge of character. Jerome at first indeed displayed great fortitude, but after the martyrdom of Hus his courage entirely failed him. Hoping to save his life and regain his liberty, he solemnly recanted all his former so-called heretical views. He did not even hesitate to blame severely his master Hus. He expressed his altered views in a memorable letter addressed to the Bohemian nobleman, Lacko of Kravar. The letter,[2] little known except in Bohemia, deserves translation here, as it throws a strong and strange light on the character of Jerome of Prague. The letter, dated September 12, 1415, runs thus: "My services to you, first of all, dear noble lord, and my particular benefactor. I bring to the knowledge of your lordship that I am alive and in good health at Constance. I hear that there is much excitement in Bohemia and Moravia because of the death of Master Hus, as if he had been unjustly condemned and brutally burnt. Therefore I write this of my own free will to you as to my lord, that you may know what you should do. Therefore I beg you through this letter, maintain nowise that wrong was done to him (Hus). According to my belief, that was done to him which had to be done. Do not believe, my lord, that I write this forced by necessity, nor that I deserted him through fear. I was long kept in prison and many great scholars endeavoured to lead me to other views,

[1] Printed by Mares, *Listy Husovy* (Letters of Hus), p. 228.

[2] This letter, written in Bohemian, was first printed by Dobrovsky in his *Geschichte der böhmischen Sprache und Literatur*. It was subsequently reprinted in the collection entitled *Vybor z Literatury ceske* (Selections from Bohemian Literature), and in Palacky, *Documenta*.

but they did not induce me to change my opinions. I also believed that injury had been done to him (Hus). But when the articles, because of which he was condemned, were shown to me, I examined them very carefully and discussed them repeatedly with more than one scholar. I then clearly understood that of these articles some were heretical, some false, others liable to cause scandal and harm. But I still continued doubtful, not thinking that these articles were by the deceased; for I believed that they contained only fragments and segments taken from the context of his speeches, and that his meaning had thus been altered.[1] And I began to wish for his books, and the council gave me some manuscripts written by his own hand that I might examine them. Then I, together with reverent masters of the holy scriptures, again examined the articles because of which he had been burnt, and compared them with the books written in his own handwriting; and I found in his books all the contents of the articles, fully and almost in the same words. Therefore I cannot do otherwise than justly declare that the deceased wrote many false and hurtful things. And I, who was his friend, and with my lips defended his honour against all, having found this, must decline to be the defender of such errors; this I have in lengthy speech declared before the whole council. Now having much work to do, I cannot write more extensively, but I think that with God's help I shall write extensively about the events concerning me, and (these writings) I will send to your grace. And now I commend myself to your favour. Written by my own hand at Constance on the Thursday after the nativity of the mother of God."

Dobrovsky, who discovered this important document in the Carthusian monastery of Dolein in Moravia, had at first some doubts as to its authenticity. Further research tends, however, to prove that Jerome certainly was the author of

[1] It has been previously shown that the council did actually proceed in this manner for the purpose of convicting Hus of heresy.

this mean and Judas-like letter. Dr. Flajshans, the most recent Bohemian writer on the life of Hus, admits the authenticity of Jerome's letter, but suggests that he may have been forced to write it. There can at any rate only have been moral persuasion, for there is no evidence whatever to prove that torture was applied to Jerome. That the true nature of Jerome should formerly have been so little known is undoubtedly a consequence of the tradition—which arose at a time when little was known of Bohemia—placing Jerome on the same, or nearly the same level as Hus. Even this short note on Jerome is, I think, sufficient to denote the world-wide difference that existed between the two men. Jerome, a man not exempt from the scepticism innate in the humanist, recanted for the purpose of saving his life and regaining his liberty.

As mentioned in his letter, Jerome shortly after Hus's martyrdom, recanted the so-called heresies of which he had been accused. This was done by means of a statement which Jerome himself drew up and forwarded to the council. That assembly, however, distrusting his motives,[1] decided to demand a formal and solemn recantation in the presence of the council. Jerome consented and his public abjuration took place at a meeting of the council on Sepetmber 23, 1415.[2] Jerome first read out the statement which he had previously sent to the council, stating that knowing the true Catholic and apostolic faith, he anathematised all heresies, and in particular the teaching of John Wycliffe and John Hus as contained in their works, tracts and sermons before the clergy and the people. Having read out this statement, Jerome added that, had he formerly possessed the knowledge which he now had, he would never have maintained these errors. If then his liberty were

[1] See the statement in Von der Hardt, T. iv. p. 497: "Pellectus per concilium ad recantandum non ex animo sed metu supplicii ac spe evadendi consensit tandem, formula a se conscripta et in congregatione solemni praelecta."

[2] Von der Hardt (T. iv., pp. 499-514) gives a full account of the proceedings on that day and prints in full the documents referred to above.

restored to him he would, possessing the knowledge and instruction which he had now acquired, be ruled by these precepts, and offer his soul as a new one to the bride of Christ, that is to say the holy church. The council, however, evidently continued to distrust Jerome, and insisted on his making several further statements in which he anathematised a large number of articles derived from the writings of Wycliffe, which were all specially enumerated. He also took a solemn oath henceforth to remain faithful to the true doctrine of the Catholic Church, adding that, should he fail to do so, he accepted as deserved every punishment that might be inflicted on him; he lastly declared that he had made all these statements freely and spontaneously.

Jerome was not, however, liberated. He appears soon to have regretted his recantation. On October 29, 1415, Gerson read before the council a statement [1] treating of the recantation of heretics generally, but obviously aimed at Jerome. Among other matters, Gerson stated that one who had recanted heretical opinions must necessarily continue to be suspected of heresy. This declaration of Gerson produced a great impression on the mind of Jerome. He felt that he had failed to obtain the confidence of those to whose cause he had devoted himself. On the other hand, though he had not been freed, his renunciation had rendered his imprisonment less severe. It is therefore certain that echoes of the fierce resentment and religious enthusiasm prevailing in Bohemia must have reached him at Constance. He determined to act in a manner which practically involved suicide. It is scarcely necessary to mention how greatly classical learning and that of the stoics in particular has lauded suicide, as the door ever open, when all other issues are closed. These theories of the ancients must have appealed to an early humanist in a manner inconceivable to us whose ancestors have for five centuries been steeped in Greek and Latin culture.

[1] " De protestatione et revocatione in negotio fidei " (printed by Von der Hardt, T. iii. pp. 39-52)

Not long after Gerson's declaration Jerome again gave utterance to statements that were considered heretical, thus as writes Theodoric Vrie,[1] scandalising the whole sacred council. When reproached by members of the council, he claimed a hearing before the full assembly. This was granted to him, and he appeared before the council on May 30, 1416. De Vrie notices his clear voice, pallid look and long black beard. Questioned by members of the council with regard to the heretical opinions which he had again expressed, Jerome answered in a very impressive manner. He declared that he by no means denied having recanted, but that he had never committed a greater sin and crime than when he wrote his recantation. Never also had he so greatly regretted any sin, as he now regretted having rejected the opinions of those holy men, John Wycliffe and John Hus, and having expressed his approval of the death of those good men. A new act of accusation against him was now drawn up[2] which contained principally the same accusations that had previously been brought against Jerome. Though he who wishes to study thoroughly the history of the Bohemian reformation must consider it his duty to wade through the contents of this ponderous document, I do not consider it necessary to refer to them here. The only interesting part of the document is that which refers to Jerome's connection with the "orthodox" Ruthenians, as it bears witness to the intense animosity which then already existed between the Roman and Greek churches.

A very striking document concerning the last days of Jerome has fortunately been preserved and has rightly attracted great attention. I refer to Poggio Bracciolini's letter to Bruni (Leonardo Aretino).[3] Though Poggio was present at the council as papal legate, his letter is written entirely in

[1] Von der Hardt, T. iii., p. 182. [2] *Ibid.* T. iv., pp. 634-691.

[3] "Poggii Florentini de Hieronymi Haeritici obitu et supplicio narratio." (It has been frequently printed, by Von der Hardt, by Freherus—*scriptores rerum Bohemicarum*, together with Aenaeas Sylvius, *Historia Bohemica*, by Palacky, *Documenta*, etc.)

the manner of an Italian humanist, and its brilliancy and eloquence have bestowed on the memory of Jerome a not entirely merited aureole. Poggio by no means approved of Jerome as a church-reformer. He indeed states that if he had said anything contrary to the teaching of the church, he deserved punishment, and that the great talents that nature had given him were his misfortune. It was his eloquence and courage that appealed to the humanist. "I must confess," writes Poggio of Jerome, "that I never saw one who in the eloquence of his defence came as near to the eloquence of the ancients, whom we admire so much." Later on the Italian humanist writes: "His (Jerome's) voice was sweet, clear and resounding. The dignity of the orator's jests now expressed indignation, now moved to compassion, which, however, he neither claimed nor wished to obtain. He stood before his judges undaunted and intrepid. Not only not fearing, but even seeking death, he appeared as another Cato. He was indeed a man worthy of eternal memory in men's minds."

That such a mode of defence or rather defiance did not tend to conciliate the members of the council is evident. Jerome's speech[1] sealed his fate. The prelates were no doubt particularly indignant at Jerome's allusions to the unedifying life then led by most members of the clergy.[2] Jerome was as a relapsed heretic condemned to death at the stake, and the sentence was carried out on May 30, immediately after his appearance before the council. Poggio thus describes his death: "With joyful brow, cheerful countenance, and elated face he went to his doom. He feared not the flames, not the torments, not death. None of the stoics ever suffered death with so constant and brave a mind, and he indeed seemed to desire it. When he had reached the spot where he was to die,

[1] Printed in full in Von der Hardt's account of the trial (T. iv.)

[2] Jerome stated: "Cum patrimonia ecclesiarum primum deberentur pauperibus et advenis ac demum fabricis, indignum videri, dispendi illa meretricibus, conviviis, equorum copiae aut canum saginae, cultui vestimentorum et aliis rebus indignis religione Christi" (Palacky, *Documenta*).

he devested himself of his garments, and knelt down in prayer. Logs of wood were then piled about round his body, which they covered up to the breast. When they were lighted, he began to sing a hymn, which was interrupted by the smoke and the flames. This, however, is the greatest proof of the constancy of his mind, that when the lictor (town official or beadle) wished to light the stake behind his back, that he might not see it, he said: Come here and light the stake before my eyes, for if I had feared it I should never have come to this spot, as it was in my power to fly. Thus perished a man eminent beyond belief. I saw his end, I contemplated every one of his acts. Be it that he acted thus from faithlessness or from obstinacy, you could perceive that it was a man of the philosophic school who had perished. . . . Mutius did not allow his hand to be burnt with more brave a mind than this man his whole body. Socrates did not drink the poison as willingly as this man submitted himself to the flames." [1]

Though Jerome perished by the same terrible death as Hus, nothing can be more different than the circumstances which preceded the deaths of the two men. Hus, inspired here as everywhere by a truly Christian feeling, was ready to render up his life should his duty as a Christian oblige him to do so. Meanwhile, he " guarded it as God's high gift from scathe and wrong." Thus he refused to go to Rome, where certain death awaited him, because he believed that his conscience then ordered him to live. He very clearly expressed his views on this subject in a passage in the treatise *De Ecclesia*, which I have previously quoted. He did not heed the accusation of cowardice, which was in consequence raised against him by his enemies, and which has been repeated by some of his modern detractors. Similarly, he did not hesitate to leave

[1] Though Poggio Bracciolini's account of the death of Jerome, of which he was an eye-witness, is somewhat rhetorical, yet it can on the whole be considered as trustworthy. Other writers describe the event similarly, though they lay less stress on the heroism of Jerome. Only Richenthal, not a very reliable authority, states that Jerome " screamed lowdly " while in the flames.

Prague when his life was menaced there by the Germans, who were determined to destroy the Bethlehem chapel. His difficulty of deciding what course to adopt in this case is shown by many passages of his writings belonging to this period. When, on the other hand, the council demanded that he should recant heretical opinions which he had never held, he refused and calmly and unhesitatingly laid down his life. He well knew that had he himself admitted that he had been a heretic, his life-work for the church and the state of Bohemia would have been undone. Jerome, on the other hand, did not hesitate both at Vienna and at Constance to preserve his life by means that can hardly be called otherwise than dishonourable. When life, or at least the pleasures and interests of life, appeared to vanish, he faced and certainly bravely faced death.

# CHAPTER XII

## THE HUSSITE WARS

It would be impossible to realise the importance of Hus in the world's history if we dealt of the events of his life independently of those of the subsequent Hussite wars. In a passage which I have previously quoted, Palacky has pointed out how comparatively unimportant would have been the place of Hus in history had not the unrivalled bravery of the Bohemian people and the genius of leaders such as Zizka enabled Bohemia to beat back the united forces of almost all Europe, which endeavoured to crush the religious movement in the country. Though Palacky died more than thirty years ago, no other writer has since his time more clearly grasped the real character of the Hussite wars than he did. In one of his controversial writings,[1] he says: "One school of historians to which I have the honour to belong has maintained that the Hussite war is the first war in the world's history that was fought, not for material interests, but for intellectual ones, that is to say, for ideas. This ideal standpoint was so seriously and so sincerely maintained by the Bohemians that when victorious they never attempted to replace it by a more interested policy. It is true that during the war they forced foreign communities to pay taxes and an annual tribute to them; but they never thought of subduing them, or of extending their dominion over foreign lands—a thing that under the circumstances of the time would not have been difficult. I know that among the modern school of German historians there are persons[2] who

[1] *Die Geschichte des Hussitenthums und Professor Constantin Höfler.* I have here only been able to allude briefly to this brilliant passage. Those interested in the matter will find a translation of a considerable part of it in my *Lectures on the Historians of Bohemia*, pp. 103-105.

[2] Palacky uses the somewhat contemptuous German word, *Subjecte.*

attribute this attitude mainly to the incapacity of the ancient Bohemians, and who with brutal derision attempt to deduce from it their racial inferiority. I leave it to a more enlightened posterity to decide what conduct is nearer to barbarism—that of the disinterested victor, or that of the imperious and rapacious conqueror. Two centuries later the enemies, after one victory—that of the White Mountain—certainly acted differently, and endeavoured in every way to use their victory for the purpose of material gain. Was their conduct nobler and more Christian? As to the Hussites, they never during their prolonged and heroic struggle ceased to consider it and to term it a struggle for the liberty of God's word. . . ."

This feeling here so finely expressed by a man of learning is innate in the mass of the Bohemian people; it is as strong in the peasant or workman as in the Bohemian scholar who has studied the annals of his country. " The Hussite battles, as Dr. Gindely[1] wrote, " were fought for a national cause; poets and painters chose them as their subject, the most stirring popular songs date from this time; the names of the leaders of this movement have lingered in the memory of the people; the name of no Bohemian king is as familiar to them as that of the blind leader of the Hussite armies.[2] The violent destruction of the national constitution by Ferdinand II., the sufferings which the country endured during the Austrian war of succession at the hand of Prussians, Bavarians and Frenchmen, events that occurred but one or two centuries ago, are forgotten. On all these occasions the peasant was a mere sufferer, he was deprived of his religious convictions or of his worldly goods, but he never defended himself. In the Hussite wars he had himself been a fighter, he had been a victorious warrior, and his flail and fighting club had successfully beaten back the enemies of his country and his faith.

[1] Abridged from Dr. Gindely, *Geschichte der Ertheilung des böhmischen Majestätsbriefes*, pp. 116-117.
[2] Zizka.

Though the Bohemians were, even after the execution of Hus, reluctant to separate entirely from the Western Church, the events that followed the death of the master led inevitably to that result. The treacherous conduct of the council and particularly of Sigismund, the heir to the throne, caused general and vehement indignation in Bohemia. If civil war did not immediately break out in the country, this must be attributed to the attitude of King Venceslas, and more particularly of his queen. Queen Sophia openly expressed her indignation at the treatment of her former chaplain, and Venceslas made no secret of the displeasure which the treachery of his brother, and the conduct of the Bohemian priests who had so fiercely attacked Hus, caused him. No doubt forseeing this, John "the iron," the wealthy Bishop of Litomysl, who had been the leader of the adversaries of Hus, addressed a letter[1] to King Venceslas on July 11, only a few days after the death of the master. He had heard, he wrote, that many said that he had acted at Constance in a manner hostile to Venceslas and to Bohemia; he begged the king to place no faith in such reports, and declared that he had sought only the king's advantage and the honour of the country.

This letter formed the beginning of an extensive correspondence between the members of the council and Sigismund on one hand, the Bohemians on the other; this correspondence had, however, but little influence on the course of events. The national movement soon assumed a somewhat revolutionary, though as yet by no means anti-dynastic character. Some of the nobles and knights connected with the court of King Venceslas were indeed among the leaders of the movement. Together with a large part of the nobles of Moravia the Bohemian nobles met at Prague on September 2, 1515. They drew up a solemn protest,[2] which they forwarded to the council. The

[1] Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 563-565.

[2] The document from which I extract this passage is well known under the name of the *Protestatio Bohemorum*. It has been printed by Von der Hardt, Löder, and more recently by Palacky. Löder states that his edition

document said: "Master John Hus was a good, just and catholic man, who lived in our kingdom for many years and was favourably known, because of his good conduct, pure life and fame; in a truly catholic manner he taught us and our subjects[1] the law of scripture and of the holy prophets, expounding the books of both the Old and New Testament, according to the teaching of the holy doctors, of whom the church approves. He preached much and left many writings, and he consistently detested all errors and heresies, and continuously and faithfully admonished us and all the faithful in Christ also to detest them; he also by his words, writings and deeds exhorted us, as far as it was in his power, to preserve peace and charity. We have never heard, nor been able to understand—in spite of all the attention which we gave to the matter—that the said Master John Hus ever taught any errors or heresies in his speeches, or preached or asserted such matters in any fashion whatever, or that he scandalised by word or deed us or our subjects in any way. Living piously and gently in Christ he both by word and deed strove most diligently to conform to the evangelical law and the teaching of the holy fathers, for the edification of the holy mother the church, and for the salvation of his fellow-men." This valuable document clearly expresses the opinion which the more intellectual and more pious of his countrymen formed of Hus's life and teaching immediately after his death. The letter ends with what may again be considered a covert threat to Sigismund. The nobles declared that any one who should affirm that heresies had sprung up in Bohemia or Moravia should be considered the worst of traitors unless such statements should be made by Sigismund, the heir and successor to the throne, whom, however, the nobles hoped and believed not to be guilty of such an offence. This was undoubtedly a prelude to

was from a manuscript preserved at Edinburgh of which a copy existed at Oxford. (See my *Bohemia, a Historical Sketch*, p. 140, n.)

[1] *i.e.* the tenants on the estates of the Bohemian nobles.

the subsequent deposition of Sigismund. This protest, which bore the seals of four hundred and fifty-two nobles and knights of Bohemia and Moravia, was forwarded to Constance, and caused great indignation and some consternation among the members of the council.

The Bohemian patriots were far too shrewd not to perceive the grave danger to which their bold attitude exposed them. Only three days after their letter of defiance had been sent to Constance, they bound themselves by a solemn covenant [1] to unite in the defence of freedom of thought and in resistance to arbitrary and unjust excommunications. They decided to send to Constance envoys who were to complain of the murder of Hus. They maintained the right, and even the duty of the priests on their estates to preach the word of God freely and truly in accordance with the teaching of Scripture. Should a priest be by his bishop hindered from acting in this manner, the rector, doctors, and magisters of the theological faculty of the University of Prague were to act as arbiters. Should a pope at a later period be elected, lawfully and according to the ancient regulations, they would send representatives to him who were to complain of the injury done to Bohemia by the false accusation of heresy, which had been brought against the country. They finally pledged themselves to defend by all means the principles contained in their declaration, and resolved that a committee of three—consisting of two Bohemian and one Moravian noblemen—should be intrusted with the organisation of the defence of the country, should it be attacked. The confederated nobles invited King Venceslas to join them, but in consideration of his brother, whom he feared even more than he hated him, he declined, probably against the advice of the good Queen Sophia. Soon afterwards the lords favourable to the cause of Rome, who were not numerous,

[1] Known as " Pactio multorum baronum Bohemiae et Moraviae de tuenda libera verbi Dei praedicatione contemnendisque excommunicationibus injustis " (Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 590-595).

but among whom were some of the most powerful nobles, also formed a confederacy whose members pledged themselves to continue obedient to the universal church and to the council.

Sigismund at this moment displayed a great literary activity, perhaps still hoping to avert war with Bohemia. He had left Constance for a time and proceeded to Paris, from where he sent two letters to Bohemia, both dated March 21, 1416.[1] The one was addressed to the utraquist nobles. As communion in the two kinds was one of the principal tenets of the national party in Bohemia, they began at this time to be generally known as utraquists. The letter certainly bears witness to the excessive perfidy and falseness of Sigismund, on which most historians have not laid sufficient stress. Sigismund began by stating that he deeply regretted that the nobles had acted in opposition to the authority of his dearly beloved brother Venceslas, who could not approve of a confederation among the nobles of his realm formed without his consent. He further declared that had Hus not arrived at Constance before him, but appeared in his train, matters might have turned out differently. This statement can hardly have greatly impressed the Bohemians, who knew that next to the Bishop of Litomysl and the spies in his pay, no one was more responsible for the execution of Hus than Sigismund himself. Sigismund's words overheard by Mladenovic[2] stating that even should Hus recant, he should not be allowed to return to his country, had already become widely known. The King of Hungary ended his letter by informing the Bohemians that as even the princes who had previously adhered to Peter de Luna (Benedict XIII.) now recognised the authority of the council, Bohemia would incur great danger, should its representatives venture to resist the entire power and authority of the Roman Church. On the same day Sigismund addressed a letter to the Romanist nobles of Bohemia, and particularly to Conrad,

[1] Both these letters are printed by Palacky, *Documenta*, pp. 609-615.
[2] See Chapter VIII.

Archbishop of Prague, and John, Bishop of Litomysl, who were their most prominent representatives. He praised their devotion to the Roman Church and entreated them to continue faithful to it. About this time,[1] Sigismund also addressed a letter to his sister-in-law, Queen Sophia of Bohemia. He informed her that he had heard to his great regret that many in the Bohemian realm had been infected by execrable crime and the perversity of error, and casting from them the seamless coat of Christ, which the regeneration of holy baptism had conferred on them, had succumbed like men walking in darkness and in the shadow of death to the seductions of vileness and malice. A great outcry, not without sorrow, had therefore arisen at the holy council of Constance, because of the rumour which ever became stronger and more frequent, that in these lands (Bohemia and Moravia) the clearness of piety had been overclouded and the worship of the divine name had been mercilessly mocked. Sigismund then expressed hopes that the queen would pluck this deadly herb (of heresy), which weakened the harvest of blessings, from her fields. He ended by referring to the proceedings against the queen and Venceslas which were being discussed at Constance. He again begged her to use her influence to extirpate heresies. Should she act otherwise he feared that punishment on the part of the council and the apostolical see, which he had hitherto prevented by interceding against the continuation of the legal proceedings, would now soon become imminent. This letter, written in the turgid style which Sigismund affected, is yet another proof of the insincerity which had become a second nature to him. Sigismund always acted entirely in union with the council, over which he indeed exercised complete control. Whether Queen Sophia, who as her letters to Pope John XXIII. and the College of Cardinals prove, was by no means deficient in penmanship, answered this letter is not

[1] The letter is undated. It is printed by Caro, *Aus der Kanzlei Kaiser Sigismunds*, pp. 55-58.

known to us. The council also attempted to use its influence to strengthen the Romanists and at the same time vehemently reviled the national party. In a letter which was sent to the papal nobles a few days after Sigismund's two letters, the council stated that Satan, the ancient enemy of the human race, who wandering and roving round the world does not cease to seek out those to whom he can communicate the poison of his damnation, had so greatly inebriated Wycliffe of damned memory, then Hus and other sectators with the chalice of Babylon, that they had wretchedly spurned the doctrines of the holy fathers and turned their minds to vanities and false madness. The letter then mentioned with regret that in the kingdom of Bohemia and the marquisate of Moravia many men, eminent through their noble birth, had damnably conspired against Jesus Christ and the Catholic faith. The most important part of the letter was the last one, in which the council announced a decision that greatly envenomed the already perilous situation. The council stated that they had appointed as legate in Bohemia and Moravia John, Bishop of Litomysl, a fervent defender of the Catholic faith, whom they had chosen among thousands. The nobles were begged to assist him in suppressing heresy in their countries.[1] This appointment of John the "iron," the arch-enemy of Hus and of the national party, signified throwing down the gauntlet to Bohemia. It is but fair to suppose that many moderate-minded members of the council had no such an intention. The absolute ignorance of Bohemian affairs, which was as frequent then as it is now, is no doubt their excuse.

While this diplomatic campaign, which I have here only been able briefly to outline, was proceeding, the Bohemians had already appealed to force, though actual warfare only began considerably later. Though the doctrine of the necessity—in distinction from the admissibility—of communion in the two kinds had only been recognised by Hus at the end of

[1] Abridged from Palacky, *Documenta*, p. 616.

his life, great importance was attached to it by the Bohemians, whose symbol the chalice became. When on the news of the execution of Hus tumults broke out in Prague, many priests who refused to administer communion in the two kinds were driven from the city, and their houses plundered, while utraquist priests took their places. The estates of wealthy prelates also did not escape. The estates of the Bishop of Litomysl were seized by neighbouring lords of the national party, and the "iron" bishop was thus, as Palacky remarks with not unnatural bitterness, relieved for a time of that care of worldly goods which had hitherto so exclusively occupied his mind. The breach between Bohemia and the Western Church was necessarily widened by the appointment of the Bishop of Litomysl as legate of the council. The Bohemians became ever more inclined to establish a national church in their country. The covenant concluded by the Bohemian nobles had already pointed to the university as an authority in religious matters. This principle was now generally accepted, particularly as church-reformers were already beginning to spread doctrines that had never been taught by Hus. On the suggestion of Master Jacobellus, the principal theologians of the university met in the so-called great college on August 9, 1417, and formulated the Hussite doctrine in the following four articles:[1]

I. The word of God shall in the kingdom of Bohemia be freely and without impediment proclaimed and preached by Christian priests.

II. The sacrament of the body and blood of God shall in the two kinds, that is in bread and wine, be freely administered to

[1] These articles are the famed articles of Prague, which later became the foundation of the compacts. Dr. Dvorsky, in a study which he sent me just before his recent death, attributes them to the year 1417, though they only became known during the siege of Prague by Sigismund in 1420. Dr. Dvorsky's conjecture has much probability. It seems unlikely that this confession of faith should have been suddenly developed during the excitement of a siege. Dr. Dvorsky also quotes references to the articles which are of an earlier date than 1420.

all faithful Christians according to the order and teaching of our Saviour.

III. The priests and monks, according to secular law, possess great worldly wealth in opposition to the teaching of Christ. Of this wealth they shall be deprived.

IV. All mortal sins, particularly those that are public, as well as all disorders opposed to God's law, shall in all classes [1] be suppressed by those whose office it is to do so. All evil and untruthful rumours [2] shall be suppressed for the good of the commonwealth, the kingdom and the nation.[3]

These articles contain the pith of the Hussite teaching, and on them were founded the compacts by which the Roman see for a time accepted at least a part of the demands of the Bohemians. Though according to Dr. Dvorsky's conjecture, which I have adopted, the origin of the articles dates as far back as 1417, they only became generally known when they were presented to Sigismund and his German allies during the siege of Prague.

Unfortunately for the cause of church-reform, discord soon broke out among the Hussites, as all members of the national party soon began to be called. A considerable party—soon to be known as the Taborites—in direct contradiction with the teaching of Hus, began at an early period to reject all sacraments except baptism and communion, the existence of purgatory, and many rites and regulations of the Roman Church. Though the dauntless and unrivalled bravery of the Taborites contributed largely to the brilliant victories of the Bohemians, yet in these dissensions lay the germ of the future downfall of the country. The fatal scission among the Hussites fore-

[1] The Bohemian word is "stav," which could in mediaeval phraseology be translated by "estate."

[2] This principally referred to the statement frequently made by the Germans that Bohemia was a heretical country.

[3] Brezova, in his full version of the articles, gives after each of them lengthy quotations from scripture and the fathers to support them. These may have been added when the articles were presented to the Germans in 1420.

shadows already the fateful battle of Lipan, and dimly even the more fateful battle of the Bila Hora,[1] where Bohemian freedom and independence perished. As all churches, even those where the utraquist rites were observed, were closed to the Taborites, they began to assemble in large numbers in the fields and on mountains. Lawrence of Brezova, the foremost among the historians of the Hussite war, writes:[2] "In the year 1419 the priests and preachers of Scripture who favoured the teaching of Hus and communion in the two kinds, who were then called Wycliffites or Hussites, and with them people of both sexes from all parts of Bohemia, both from towns and villages, began to assemble on a hill near Bechyn, to which they gave the name of Tabor. The priests carried the eucharist before them,[3] and particularly on feast days administered the sacrament to the faithful with great reverence; for the enemies of communion in the two kinds prevented the common people from receiving the communion in that fashion in any church of that neighbourhood. On the day of St. Mary Magdalene,[4] a large number of people of both sexes, and many little children, more than 40,000 people from all parts of the kingdom, assembled on this hill and with great fervour received the sacrament of the body of God and of the blood of God, according to the order of Jesus Christ, which was preserved by the primitive church. Then King Venceslas was greatly disturbed, fearing that they would put in his place Nicholas of Hus,[5] whom he had exiled from Prague because he had, accompanied by a large crowd of men, who, however, were unarmed, addressed him near the Church of St. Apollinaris, begging him to grant freely communion in both kinds to adults and children."

The Nicholas of Hus here mentioned by Brezova had been

[1] *i.e.* White Mountain.
[2] pp. 344-345 of Dr. Goll's edition.
[3] This custom became general during the Hussite wars.
[4] July 22.
[5] Contrary to what has often been written he was no relation of Master John Hus.

one of King Venceslas's courtiers, but had been banished from the court because he had at the head of a large band of men appealed to the king requesting him to grant a general permission to receive communion in the two kinds. By a decree of Venceslas religious services according to the utraquist rites had been limited to three churches in Prague. It is uncertain whether Nicholas of Hus, as stated by Brezova, intended to seize the crown of Bohemia, but it is certain that in the last months of his life Venceslas lost all his previous popularity with the Bohemian people. A weak, though well-meaning man, he had now definitely to decide whether he would throw in his lot with his people and resolutely face Sigismund and his numerous allies, or whether he would aid his treacherous younger brother in crushing the national movement and reconquering Bohemia. Finally Venceslas, intimidated by the constant threats of his brother, frightened also by the democratic character of the Taborite movement, determined to apply to Sigismund for aid, and to invite him to Bohemia.

Before the Taborites had taken any further steps, and only a week after their great meeting, events at Prague brought matters to a crisis. The Premonstratensian monk, John of Zelivo, an enthusiastic Hussite and a man of great eloquence and ambition, had acquired great popularity among the citizens of Prague. When preaching on July 30 in the Church St. Mary of the snow—one of those that had been given over to the utraquists—he spoke strongly of the oppression of the faithful, referring to the fact that several Hussites had been imprisoned by order of the German councillors of the new town, and complaining also that the utraquists were excluded from almost all the churches of the city. The faithful then proceeded to the town hall led by Zelivo. On their way they passed the church of St. Stephen and attempted to enter it. The priests had closed it on the approach of the heretics, and a struggle took place in which some were wounded on both sides and the church was considerably damaged. Matters

became more serious when the procession reached the town hall of the new town,[1] and demanded the liberation of the Hussites who were imprisoned there. In answer stones were thrown at them from the windows of the town hall by the German councillors who were strong opponents of the national movement. One of the stones struck John of Zelivo, who, as had become customary, carried the sacrament in a monstrance before the procession. The people, infuriated by this act of sacrilege, as they considered it, attacked and stormed the town hall. They found a leader in John Zizka of Trocnov, who, like Nicholas of Hus, had been a courtier of King Venceslas. The town-councillors were thrown from the windows, and those who survived the fall were killed by the people who were assembled in the market-place below. When the news reached King Venceslas he was seized with an apoplectic fit, and on August 16 a second fit ended his life.

The death of the king left Bohemia in a state of complete uncertainty. Sigismund was undoubtedly the legitimate heir to the throne, and even among the utraquists, particularly among the nobles belonging to that party, some were at first ready to recognise him as their sovereign, should he conform to the teaching of what had already become the national church. Treacherous as he always was, Sigismund had hitherto generally concealed his blind adherence to Rome and his hatred of the Bohemian people. He had even, on several occasions, expressed his regret that Hus had been executed, and stated that this would not have occurred had Hus arrived at Constance with the king, and after having received the letter of safe-conduct. The great mass of the Bohemian people, with that instinctive intuition that sometimes characterises the masses, always distrusted Sigismund, to whom they rightly attributed the responsibility for the death of the revered master Hus. The eloquent priest John of Zelivo, who had at that time great influence over the people of Prague,

[1] In the present Karlovo Namesti (Charles Square).

denounced Sigismund in apocalyptic language, calling him the fiery seven-headed dragon of the revelation.[1] Immediately after the death of Venceslas rioting broke out in Prague, many churches were destroyed, and all priests who refused to accept the utraquist rites were expelled from the city. With them most of the German inhabitants left the town. They were almost all adherents of the Roman Church, and bitter enemies of the national party, which they believed to be opposed to the undue predominance which they had obtained in Bohemia.

Sigismund was unable to proceed to Bohemia immediately after his brother's death, as urgent affairs required his presence in Hungary. He determined to adopt a temporising policy, as long as he was unable to enter Bohemia with an overwhelming armed force. He therefore appointed as regent Queen Sophia, whom her known sympathy with the Hussite cause rendered very popular. As her coadjutor he named the Supreme Burgrave Cenek of Wartenberg, an ambitious nobleman who was in matters of religion entirely guided by what he believed to be his personal interest. Tranquillity returned to Prague for a short time, but the action of the Taborites soon led to new and graver disturbances. At a great meeting on the Tabor hill on the day of St. Venceslas (September 28, 1419) the Taborites resolved to march on Prague. Queen Sophia, informed of their intention, hurriedly summoned a large force of German mercenaries to her aid. Infuriated by the presence of these enemies of their country and their race, the whole city of Prague rose in arms. Fierce fighting began in all parts of the city.[2] Aided by the Taborite forces which, led by Nicholas of Hus and Zizka of Trocnov, had meanwhile arrived at Prague, the citizens obtained possession of the Vysehrad, where the

[1] Zelivo referred to the seven crowns which Sigismund wore and also to the new order of knighthood named "the dragon" which he had just instituted.

[2] It is beyond the purpose of this work to give an account of the many battles and sieges of the Hussite wars. I have given some account of them in my *Bohemia, a Historical Sketch*. Some notice of the battles in and around Prague will also be found in my *Prague* (mediæval town series).

defenders, King Venceslas's former bodyguard, composed of friends of the national party, offered little resistance. An attack on the Hradcany castle, however, was unsuccessful. In the course of this prolonged street-fighting, of which the contemporary chroniclers give a vivid account, a large part of the city was destroyed. The citizens began to desire peace, and through the mediation of Cenek of Wartemberg a truce was concluded. The citizens of Prague again surrendered to the royal troops the Vysehrad castle; the utraquist nobles, as whose spokesman Wartemberg acted, promised to support their countrymen in their demand of independence for the Bohemian church. The Taborites, who disapproved of this compromise, left Prague and proceeded to Plzen and then to the Tabor hill, where their first meetings had been held. They here built the city of Tabor, which became their stronghold up to the time of their final downfall.

The not very favourable terms of this armistice, the retreat of the Taborites, and the expectation of Sigismund's arrival caused a short-lived Romanist reaction in Bohemia. The miners of Kutna Hora, strong adherents of the Roman Church, seized many utraquist priests and other Hussites and threw them into the shaft of one of their mines, to which they had in derision given the name of Tabor. Many Romanists and Germans returned to Prague and several utraquist priests were expelled from their churches. The Germans greatly rejoiced, and as a contemporary chronicler [1] tells us, " smiled and clapped their hands, saying now these heretical Hussites and Wycliffites will perish and there will be an end of them."

Sigismund had meanwhile arrived in the lands of the Bohemian crown, and at Brno [2] received the envoys of the cities of Prague. They protested of their thorough loyalty to their new sovereign, and begged only to be allowed to continue to follow the rites of the utraquist church. The king returned an evasive answer. He merely stated that he intended to rule

[1] Lawrence of Brezova, p. 354.

[2] In German, Brünn.

according to the example of his father, Charles IV., whose memory was still revered in Bohemia. He demanded that all chains and barricades that had been erected in Prague during the recent street-fighting should be removed, and that the Romanist priests and monks should no longer be molested. Sigismund did not, as had probably been expected, proceed immediately to Prague. Disliking and distrusting all compromises, he was determined to appear in Bohemia only at the head of so large a military force that the country would be absolutely at his mercy. Sigismund believed that such a force could most easily be raised by recurring to the time-honoured expedient of proclaiming a crusade. The term crusade, originally employed to designate warlike expeditions undertaken to free Palestine from Mahomedan rule, had long been misused to describe wars undertaken from worldly and often base motives. The last crusade had been the one undertaken by the subsequently deposed Pope John XXIII. against his enemy the King of Naples.[1] On the advice of Sigismund, Pope Martin V., whom the council of Constance had in 1418 chosen as pope, proclaimed a crusade against Bohemia on March 1, 1420. In this document [2] the new pope declared that Sigismund, his beloved son in Christ, wishing to deserve the high dignity conferred on him by providence, had determined to extirpate the deadly poison of the heresy of Wycliffites and Hussites, and that he (the pope) greatly extolled this plan of the king and prayed for its success with eyes uplifted to heaven, for whose advantage this matter was undertaken. The pope therefore entreated and exhorted all kings, dukes, marquises, princes, counts and barons, potentates,[3] captains, magistrates and other officials and their representatives, also all communities of cities, castles, fortresses, villages and other localities, and all who were zealous for the name and fame of

[1] See Chapter V.

[2] Printed by Palacky, *Urkundliche Beiträge zur Geschichte der Hussitenkriege*, pp. 17-30. I give above only a short extract from this strange document.

[3] The Italian "podesta" is probably meant.

Christianity, strongly and manfully to undertake the extermination of the Wycliffites, Hussites, other heretics and all who favoured, abetted and defended them. The document ended with a promise of plenary indulgence to all who should take part in the coming crusade.

This proclamation caused intense fury in Bohemia, which became yet greater when the people were informed of the cruel death which one of their fellow-citizens had suffered at Breslau by order of Sigismund, who, not feeling as yet strong enough to crush Bohemia, had proceeded to Silesia from Brno. John Krasa, a wealthy citizen of Prague, was accused of having spoken with disapproval of the sentence passed by the council of Constance on Hus, and of having maintained the necessity of communion in the two kinds. By order of Sigismund he was placed before an ecclesiastical tribunal, which condemned him to be dragged by horses through the streets of Breslau. The cruel sentence was carried out on March 15, 1420. Krasa endured his martyrdom with great courage and fortitude.[1] Many of the nobles of Bohemia, including the supreme Burgrave Cenek of Wartemberg, were present at the death of Krasa, and were greatly incensed by the cruelty of Sigismund. Contemporary chroniclers attribute largely to this occurrence the defection of Wartemberg from the cause of Sigismund, which took place shortly afterwards.

The numerous bands of so-called crusaders now began to march on Bohemia from all directions. Sigismund himself crossed the frontier about the beginning of May. The news that he received on entering Bohemia was by no means favourable. Cenek of Wartemberg had, on April 17, joined the

[1] Brezova refers to the death of Krasa in very pathetic words. He writes: (Krasa) " in fide sancta permansit ac in sancto perstitit proposito tamquam miles strenuus ac athletha domini fortissimus; orans namque pro suis inimicis omnes eorum blasphemias, hereticationes, probra ac derisiones, nec non et penas sustinuit durissimas magistri sui ac pastoris Jesu domini exemplo, pro veritate evangelica tamquam ovis ductus ad victimam. Tandemque spiritu exalato ad dominum in spe bona migrare meruit ac palmam martirii adipisci, quod et nobis prestare dignetur Deus trinus et unus in secula benedictus seculorum " (pp. 358-359).

national party and concluded an alliance with the cities of Prague. In a proclamation published on April 20, he enumerated the grievances of the Bohemians against "the Roman and Hungarian King Sigismund, who had not been crowned as King of Bohemia." The proclamation ended by declaring that no Bohemian should under penalty of losing his honour, his fortune, and his life fail to take part in the defence of the country. General, national and religious enthusiasm prevailed in Bohemia, but it unfortunately led to deplorable excesses. The Hussite movement for a time assumed an iconoclastic character. Many ancient monasteries, monuments of the finest ancient Bohemian architecture, were destroyed both at Prague and in other parts of the country. Many monks and nuns were treated with great cruelty. Though some writers have attempted to attenuate these outrages, they cannot be sufficiently blamed both for their base brutality and their political ineptitude. In a moment of greatest peril Bohemia thus alienated many frends. Cenek of Wartemberg, who held the castles of Hradcany and Vysehrad, concluded a truce with Sigismund, stipulating only that the religious services on his estates should continue to he held according to the utraquist rites. The citizens of Prague also endeavoured to come to an agreement with Sigismund. The King of Hungary, after crossing the frontier, first attacked the city of Kralove Hradec,[1] which surrendered after a short resistance. From here he marched to Kutna Hora, the centre of a German and Romanist population. It was here that he received the envoys of the cities of Prague. He had found at Kutna Hora that at least some Bohemians were opposed to Hussitism and now believed his victory certain. He assumed a more overbearing manner, and received the citizens in a very opprobrious fashion. He overwhelmed them with reproaches and demanded unconditional surrender. Informed of this, the citizens of Prague, though they were the most moderate of all

[1] In German, Königgrätz.

utraquists, knew that war to the knife was inevitable, and immediately began to strengthen the fortifications of their city. They also, understanding the folly of internal dissensions in face of a powerful enemy, sent messengers to Tabor begging the Taborites " if they wished verily to obey God's word, to march to their aid without delay, and with as many men as they could muster." Zizka did not hesitate for a moment. Headed by him and the three other " captains of the people," the Taborites, numbering about six thousand men, set out on the day the message had reached them, and defeating a Romanist force which endeavoured to intercept them, arrived at Prague on May 20. About the same time the forces of the Bohemian towns Loun, Slany, and Zatec also arrived in the city, and several utraquist nobles and knights with their followers hurried to Prague to take part in the defence of the menaced capital.

Such slight succour appeared very insufficient in view of the fact that from all parts of Europe vast armies were marching on Prague. Yet the citizens did not lose courage for a moment. As I have written elsewhere,[1] " absolute confidence in Scripture rendered despondency impossible. A thorough acquaintance with the Old Testament is evident in all the contemporary records of those stirring times. No man or woman of Prague doubted that the Lord, who had once struck down the forces of Sennacherib, would now strike down the forces of Sigismund."

At the end of May and the beginning of June the vast armies of so-called crusaders began to encircle Prague.[2] Their full amount is stated to have been about 200,000 men. They had on their march committed terrible depredations and murders, killing all Bohemians, even those who belonged to the Roman Church. Sigismund at the end of May arrived

[1] *Prague*, p. 53.

[2] For an account of the siege of Prague and the battles of the Zizkov and Vysehrad, see my *Bohemia, a Historical Sketch*, and *Prague*.

in the neighbourhood of Prague, where the castles of Hradcany, and Vysehrad were still held by his adherents. He for some time hesitated to attack the city, knowing that new forces were daily joining the crusading armies. At last it was decided that a general assault should take place on July 14. Some of Sigismund's German allies attacked the Vitkov—now Zizkov—hill, but were repulsed with great loss by the Taborites, led by Zizka. Even the Taborite women took part in the defence. One of these women surpassed the men in courage. When the Bohemians were for a moment obliged to retreat, she refused to do so, saying, " It is not beseeming that a faithful Christian should give way to Antichrist" [1] After this failure the attacks on the other parts of the town were also abandoned. Both parties hoped by negotiations to come to an agreement, and the utraquist nobles who, from dynastic motives had remained faithful to Sigismund, but shared the religious views of their countrymen, attempted to act as mediators. The moment seemed a favourable one for a pacification. The Bohemians had in the articles of Prague, which had in all probability been at least outlined previously, a programme that united all national parties. As Mr. Krummel [2] has well pointed out, the differences among the Hussites were not as yet considerable. All acknowledged the teaching of Hus, and all strove for the same purpose, the reformation of the church in accordance with the customs of the primitive church. All Hussites condemned the evils caused by the temporal power granted to popes and bishops, the abuse of indulgences, and the immoral life led by the priesthood of the period. All strove to establish a truly saintly and apostolical church of which laymen as well as priests should form an active part. The views of Hus were still fresh in the memory of all, and when we notice how greatly discord increased among the Hussites, when the memory of the master

[1] Brezova, p. 388.
[2] Leopold Krummel, *Utraquisten und Taboriten.*

grew dimmer, we realise what an irreparable loss to Bohemia and the cause of church-reform the comparatively early death of Hus was.

The articles of Prague were shown to the utraquist nobles who had attempted mediation, and they strongly approved of them. It was, however, necessary that the articles should be jointly discussed by representatives of the national party and by opponents of church-reform. Even the choice of a meeting-place proved difficult because of the intense mutual distrust. The Hussites in particular, warned by the recent fate of Hus, hesitated to entrust their safety to men who might possibly plead that no faith should be kept with heretics. All these difficulties were, however, surmounted, and it was decided that a meeting in the open air should take place in the Mala Strana (" small quarter ") of Prague. The Romanist representatives were Louis, patriarch of Aquileja, Simon of Ragusa Bishop of Trau, and several other dignitaries of the Roman Church. The Bohemians were represented by the most prominent theologians of the university, and several leaders of the utraquist and Taborite armies were also present. The principal speakers were on the Roman side the learned doctor Peter de Vergeriis, and on the Bohemian magister John of Pribram, who was already considered one of the most learned theologians of the University of Prague. The debate was carried on with great decorum and gravity, and the subjects discussed, as Palacky notes with his usual acumen, already foreshadowed the discussions of the Council of Basel. It was, however, impossible to arrive at an agreement.

Sigismund had retired from the neighbourhood of Prague shortly after the defeat of the crusaders of Zizka's hill, but his troops still garrisoned the castles of Hradcany and Vysehrad. The last-named castle was hardly pressed by the Hussites. In the autumn of the year 1420, Sigismund made an attempt to relieve the garrison. He was, however, defeated in a very sanguinary battle fought between the village of Pankrac and

the castle of the Vysehrad on November 2. Sigismund now left Bohemia and for a time abandoned all attempts to conquer the country. The Hussites, both those of the utraquist party—who now were often known as the " Praguers," as the capital was their principal centre—and those who belonged to the Taborite party, now assumed the offensive and obtained possession of almost the whole of Bohemia. Many of the nobles, among them Cenek of Wartemberg, also now formally adopted the Hussite cause.

At this moment when Bohemia was at least for a time free from the obnoxious presence of Sigismund, it is interesting to notice briefly the development of the doctrines of Hus in the country. The moderate or utraquist party among the Hussites, who were known also as Calixtines or Praguers, was in accordance with the Church of Rome on most points, as had indeed been the case with Hus himself. The opposition of the utraquists was directed against the Roman hierarchy, not against the ancient dogmas of the Catholic Church. They accepted fully the teaching of the Roman Church with regard to the sacrament, but they maintained that communion should be administered to all in the two kinds. They declared, as I have previously mentioned, that the distinction which the Church of Rome had established in this respect between priests and laymen was unjust, and not founded on the teaching of Scripture. It may also be said that they attached more importance to the study of the Bible than priests usually did at that period. This had indeed been a characteristic of the Bohemian church-reformers from the beginning of the movement. The utraquists allowed the adornment of churches by pictures and statues, but sternly opposed the exaggerated veneration of such images, which had at that period become absolute idolatry. The calixtines strongly disapproved of the possession of secular property by the priesthood, as it led, according to their views, to immorality and the neglect of ecclesiastical duties. They wished

that their priests, to whom marriage was permitted, should differ as little as possible from the rest of the faithful, and sternly reproved the exaggerated and sometimes almost sacrilegious veneration which the Roman priests at this period claimed. Following here also the example of Hus, the Calixtines endeavoured to extend the use of the national language in the services of the church, though they did not in this respect go as far as the Taborites. Though opposed to Rome on some points, the Calixtines attached great importance to the apostolical succession of their priests and their intention undoubtedly was to found a national Bohemian church forming part of the Catholic or universal church. As previously mentioned, immediately after the death of Hus the theological faculty of the University of Prague had by the Hussites been recognised as the authority on matters of religion. When in 1421 Conrad of Vechta, archbishop of Prague, accepted the four articles of Prague, he naturally became the head of the Calixtine church. After his death a consistory became its governing body. Among the first administrators of this consistory were Mladenovic, the biographer of Hus, and magister Pribram. The learned master Jacobellus, the real originator of utraquism, held some views which were more "advanced," if we may thus describe them. His teaching was on some points similar to that of the Taborites. Only once after the death of Vechta was the Calixtine church governed by an archbishop. As will be mentioned presently, after the treaty of Iglau the estates of Bohemia chose John of Rokycan as archbishop, but he was never recognised by the pope.

The position of the calixtine church was at all times a very difficult one. The calixtines were confronted by the bitter, relentless hostility of Rome, which demanded unconditional surrender. Even those moderate Calixtines who were ready to conform to the Church of Rome on all other points, were they but allowed to retain the use of the chalice, met with a stern refusal, though this concession has on other occasions

been made by the Church of Rome.[1] There is little doubt that in this case German influence prevailed, and that the matter was treated from a political rather than from an ecclesiastical standpoint. While the conciliatory efforts of the Calixtines thus met with no success, they exposed them to the vehement enmity of the extreme church-reformers in Bohemia, and of the Taborites in particular.

Little was up to recently known of the Taborite community, and their own written documents having been destroyed, all contemporary knowledge of them has been derived from the works of their enemies. According to their main principle, the Taborites[2] admitted as truth nothing not contained in Scripture, and they rejected as false all the writings of the fathers of the church which deserved to be burnt as work of antichrist. After the year 1422 the Taborites rejected the teaching of the Roman church with regard to the sacrament, which had been the teaching of Hus also. They believed that after communion, bread remains bread and wine, but that Christ who is in heaven is through His divine grace present in the sacrament, and that those who piously receive communion partake of His divine grace. Of the sacraments the Taborites recognised only baptism, and they rejected all veneration of the virgin Mary and the saints. They also repudiated aural confession. When the faithful wished to confess, the Taborite priests said to them: Why do you run to us? We cannot forgive you your sins; go and make confession to God Himself. In distinction from Hus and the Calixtines, the Taborites rejected the doctrine of purgatory and therefore also the prayers for the dead. They were totally opposed to the traditional hierarchy of the Roman church, declaring that popes and cardinals were evil

[1] For instance, in the case of the Greek uniates.

[2] I must here acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. Siegmund Winter, whose admirable *Zivot cirkevni v. Cechach* (Church life in Bohemia), founded almost entirely on unprinted documents, contains the first reliable modern account of the community of Tabor.

doers and instruments of Antichrist. They none the less at one time chose Nicholas of Pelhrimov, one of their most learned divines as bishop. His powers were, however, very limited, and his position was similar rather to that of the bishops of the Bohemian brethren—a community that in some respects resembled that of Tabor—than to that of the bishops of the Roman church. The political principles of the Taborites were strictly democratical. They acknowledged no differences of social rank. All members of the community called each other brothers and sisters, and the organisation was at first a communistic one, though this did not continue even to the end of the short-lived community. The battle of Lipany in 1434 marks the downfall of democracy in Bohemia, and with it that of the Taborite community, though the city itself was only captured in 1452 by the utraquist King George of Podebrad, who established there the services of the utraquist or Calixtine church.

As was inevitable in a moment of general intense religious excitement, considerable differences of opinion existed among the Taborites, as among the Calixtines. The best known of all Taborites, John Zizka of Trocnov, was the leader of a moderate division, whose members after his death assumed the name of Orphans. Though Zizka was an ardent democrat and hated with undying hatred Sigismund, whom he rightly considered responsible for the death of Hus, his attitude in matters of religion was very moderate and his views did not differ greatly from those of the Calixtines. His touching devotion to the memory of Hus rendered him unwilling to accept innovations of which the master might not have approved. An intermedial position among the Taborites was that held by Nicholas of Pelhrimov, the bishop of the community. There were, however, among the Taborites also enthusiastic priests whose fanaticism was often pernicious to the cause of church-reform. Such men were John of Zelivo, who has already been mentioned, and Martin Huska, sur-

named Loquis, who is described as a man of great eloquence. The people surnamed him the "prophet Daniel" and the "angel of the hosts of the Lord." Another fanatical preacher was Peter Kanis, whose teaching was mainly founded on chiliastic views.

In connection with these fanatics, I must, according to the established custom, mention the sect of the Adamites, whose importance has been enormously exaggerated by writers hostile to the cause of Hus. Dr. Nedoma[1] has indeed proved that the Adamite sect had no connection with Hussitism, and he maintains that even the extreme Taborites, Martin Huska and Peter Kanis, cannot in any way be rendered responsible for the deeds of these obscene fanatics. Dr. Nedoma prints a letter addressed about the year 1409 to archbishop Zbynek by master John, vicar of Chvojnov, in which the latter states that in his parish the diabolical custom had sprung up that men and women met secretly at night in the woods and took part in terrible orgies, of which the worthy priest states that he dares not describe them. This was, of course, some years before the beginning of the Hussite wars. It should be added that the Adamitic movement by no means originated in Bohemia. The forerunners of the Adamites were undoubtedly the "turlupins" in France, and at the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century we hear of similar complaints against the Adamites in Germany and other countries. When some of these fanatics settled in an island in the Nezarka river near Tabor they were mercilessly destroyed by Zizka. It would hardly be necessary to dwell on this matter were it not that all enemies of the Hussite cause have laid great stress on it. Pope Martin V., when proclaiming a crusade against Bohemia, did not hesitate to identify the whole party of church-reform with the Adamites. Æneas Sylvius also in his *Historia Bohemica* has devoted to

[1] In an able article—on the codex of Stara Boleslav—published in *the Vestnik kral c. spolecnosti nauk* (Journal of the Scientific Society) for 1891.

them a chapter[1] which is neither edifying nor trustworthy. The gifted author of *Lucretia* and *Euryalus* seems to have carefully preserved all tales concerning this matter that were current at the time.

Though the Taborites were innocent of the worst accusations brought against them by their opponents, it cannot be denied that the more fanatical members of that party greatly injured the cause of church-reform. Proclaiming as they did the approach of the millennium, and denouncing as the imagining of Antichrist all secular and ecclesiastical authority, they undoubtedly encouraged communism and anarchy in Bohemia. This alone accounts for the bitterness with which the Calixtines, and magister John of Pribram in particular, write of the Taborites. This bitterness is particularly evident in Pribram's famed work entitled *The Life of the Taborite priests*.[2] He has in consequence been attacked by modern Bohemian writers, who have even asserted that he became unfaithful to the Calixtine cause. This is certainly untrue. Like Hus himself, Pribram did not wish the nation to separate entirely from the universal church, but he hoped to establish in Bohemia an autonomous national church which would pre-

[1] See my *Bohemia, a Historical Sketch*, p. 172, n.

[2] As a proof of the intense bitterness of this feeling I will quote the opening words of the *Life*. Pribram wrote: "We priests and preachers and other faithful Bohemians, both laymen and ecclesiastics, earnest and constant lovers of the Bohemian nation, cannot suffer any longer the many errors and diabolical imaginings of these Taborite priests, which they proclaim in a manner that is ever worse and worse, spreading thus hatred and fear throughout the wide Bohemian land. As we have against them neither judge nor champion, either secular or spiritual, we bring our complaints before the Almighty Lord God, and pray to Him fervently for help and justice. We appeal to the whole kingdom of heaven for help and for the punishment of these terrible sins. We beg the whole Holy Church and all faithful Bohemians to consider this matter; we beg you, we call on you, we exhort you. Listen earnestly to these most weighty warnings of the whole Bohemian land; listen, we beg you, that our warning and your heedlessness and disobedience bear not witness to your damnation and that irreparable harm befall not this land because of your delay. Verily with great sorrow and with unspeakable anguish of the heart we intend to notify and to announce to you the many terrible errors and misdeeds of these Taborite priests." (*Pribram Zivot Knezi Taborskych*—Life of the Taborite priests—in *Vybor z Literatury Ceske*—Selections from Bohemian Literature, ii. pp. 409-430).

serve the Calixtine rites, particularly with regard to communion, which would have at its head a pious, virtuous clergy not burdened with worldly riches, and which would employ the national language in its religious services. If Pribram attacked rather the Taborites than the partisans of Rome, it was because he knew that in Bohemia, where the memory of Hus was still venerated, the Roman church had for the time lost all hold on the people, while he feared that the communism and anarchy preached by some of the extreme Taborites would alienate all pious and orderly men from the cause of church-reform. Though Pribram has undoubtedly been very unjustly attacked, it is impossible to overlook his many faults. In his frequent controversies with archbishop Rokycan, a much sterner opponent of the Church of Rome, Pribram appears rather as an ambitious politician than as a preacher of God's word. Hus was not destined to find a successor. Nor Pribram nor any other Hussite divine possessed the truly apostolic character, the indomitable fortitude, the intense compassion, the spirit of absolute self-sacrifice which have rendered Hus immortal.

To avoid repetitions I have here endeavoured to give a brief outline of the teaching and organisation of the two great Hussite parties. It is hardly necessary to say that not only the Calixtine or utraquist church, which with various vicissitudes existed up to the year 1620, when all religious freedom in Bohemia perished, but also the Taborite community, whose downfall occurred in 1452, underwent several changes. To give a detailed account of these changes would be entirely beyond the purpose of this work, which endeavours only to note briefly the development of Hus's teaching. In 1420, after the great victories of the Zizkov and Vysehrad, it was hoped that a union between the contending Hussites might be obtained. A meeting for this purpose took place in Prague immediately after the battle of the Vysehrad " in the house of Peter Zmrzlik, a citizen of Prague, who lived in the old town

near the Church of St. Jacob."[1] Peter Mladenovic acted as spokesman for the University of Prague, and bishop Nicholas of Pelhrimov for the Taborites. The conference proved resultless.

After the departure of Sigismund from Bohemia, in the autumn of 1420, the country was almost entirely subdued by the armies of the Praguers and the Taborites, who sometimes acted jointly, but more often waged war separately. Even the towns of Plzen and Kutna Hora, strongholds of the Romanist or German party, were obliged to submit. The Bohemians now endeavoured to establish an orderly government. Representatives of all Bohemian parties met at Caslav in 1421, and as was customary in Bohemia at that period, both ecclesiastical and political matters were discussed. It was agreed almost unanimously to reaffirm the articles of Prague and to pronounce the deposition of Sigismund as King of Bohemia. A provisional government, including members of all parties, was formed, and it was decided —though not without some opposition—to offer the Bohemian crown to a Polish prince. Shortly afterwards Bohemia was again attacked by Sigismund and so-called crusaders. Zizka's great victory at Nebovid between Kutna Hora and Kolin on January 6, 1422, again freed Bohemia from all foreign invaders. Early in the same year Prince Korybut of Lithuania arrived in Bohemia as representative of his uncle duke Witold of Lithuania, whom the Bohemians had chosen as king. He left the country, however, before the end of the year, recalled by the Polish court through the influence of King Sigismund. About this time Zizka, who had recently acted in union with the Calixtine party, rejoined the extreme Taborites. He appears to have believed that after the departure of Korybut some of the utraquist nobles wished to recall Sigismund to Bohemia. Zizka, on whom, as on most Bohemians of his

[1] Palacky in his *History of Bohemia* (vol. iii.) gives an interesting account of this conference.

time, the Old Testament had great influence, appears to have considered himself as an instrument chosen by providence to avenge on Sigismund the murder of master John Hus, and he always pursued the King of Hungary with relentless hatred. Having the greatest general of the time at their head, the Taborites no longer hesitated to wage open warfare against the moderate or Calixtine party. What I have written has, I hope, made it clear how great was the antagonism between the Hussite parties, and at a warlike period, and among a warlike people, such differences could only be settled by "blood and iron." Zizka defeated the Calixtines, led by Cenek of Wartemberg, in a great battle at Horic (April 27, 1423). Rumours of a threatened new invasion caused the Bohemians to reunite, as indeed they at this period always did when attacked by foreign enemies. A truce was concluded at Konopist, which, reserving for future decision all questions of dogma and ecclesiastical government, limited itself to declaring that the questions concerning vestments and the decoration of churches should be entrusted to the authorities of the church, and did not depend on the law of God. So insufficient a settlement could not prove definite, and civil war again broke out as soon as the danger of foreign invasion disappeared for a time. Zizka, victorious as ever, defeated the Calixtines at Kralove Hradec and Malesov.

In the last year of Zizka's life, peace was re-established between the contending Hussite parties, mainly through the mediation of Prince Korybut, who had returned to Bohemia. A great meeting took place on the "Spitalske pole" (spital field) on the spot where the Prague suburb Karlin[1] now stands. Zizka, whose usual moderation always abandoned him when King Sigismund was in question, had sworn entirely to destroy the city of Prague, which, as he believed, still harboured some adherents of the King of Hungary. The eloquence of the young priest John of Rokycan, afterwards arch-

[1] In German, Karolinenthal.

bishop of Prague—pacified him. Rokycan strongly and successfully appealed to his feelings as a Slav and a Bohemian. It was thus as a leader of the whole united Hussite army that Zizka started on his last campaign. All the Taborite leaders, the Praguers under Prince Korybut and the Calixtine nobles joined Zizka's colours. It was indeed a fateful moment in the history of Bohemia. The allies were determined to establish the rule of the chalice in the sister-land Moravia. The scanty and often-defeated Austrian troops of Sigismund's son-in-law Albert, who held the country for the Germans, could have offered little resistance. Prince Korybut had frankly and sincerely accepted the articles of Prague, and the formerly suspicious Bohemians had begun to trust his loyalty. Had Moravia been conquered, the estates of that country would undoubtedly, jointly with those of Bohemia, have elected Korybut as king. Republican rule over an extensive country being in the fifteenth century practically an impossibility, this was certainly the one moment when the foundation of a Slavic and utraquist state in Bohemia and Moravia was possible. Fate, never favourable to Bohemia, willed it otherwise. Before crossing the Moravian frontier, the Hussites laid siege to the castle of Pribislav near that frontier. During the siege Zizka was attacked by the plague and died[1] on October 11, 1424. His death put a stop to the campaign in Moravia. The moderate Taborites adopted the name of Orphans, thus indicating that it would be impossible to them to replace their dead leader.

It is a proof of the military spirit that was general among the Hussites that, deeply as they felt the loss of their leader, they did not hesitate for a moment in continuing their resistance to the ever-returning German invaders. In Prokop the Great and Prokop the Less they found leaders who were no unworthy successors of Zizka. The Bohemians now no

[1] An account of Zizka's death—founded on the narrative of a contemporary chronicler—will be found in my *History of Bohemian Literature*, p. 152.

longer contented themselves with repulsing the invaders, but they successfully attacked the Germans and Austrians in their own countries, though they never attempted permanently to establish their rule in foreign lands. It now appearing evident that Bohemia could not be subdued, both Sigismund and the Roman church determined to enter into negotiations with the Hussites. The negotiations were prolonged and encountered many obstacles. After hesitating for a considerable time, Pope Martin consented to the meeting of a general council of the church at Basel. New difficulties, however, arose as the Bohemians demanded that all Christian churches, that is the members of the Greek and Armenian churches as well as those who belonged to the Roman church, should be invited. The Hussites also demanded special guarantees for the safety of their envoys, who might otherwise meet with the fate of Hus. A new and decisive defeat of the Romanists at Domazlice [1] on August 14, 1531, accelerated the negotiations. The Bohemians, who were assured of the safety of their envoys, and who themselves wished for peace, determined to send envoys to Basel, where the council had already assembled. Their numerous embassy, at the head of which were Prokop the Great and John of Rokycan, arrived at Basel on January 4, 1433. Very lengthy discussions at the council now began. The papal representatives, now aware that some concessions would have to be made to the Bohemians, wished to limit as much as possible these concessions. The Hussites, on the other hand, after an uninterrupted series of victories that had lasted twelve years, saw no reason to assume a conciliatory attitude. After a time, though negotiations were not entirely broken off, the Bohemian envoys left Basel. They were, however, accompanied by representatives of the council who hoped to continue the negotiations in Bohemia. In July a new embassy of the Bohemians formulated their demands in four articles, which were finally accepted in a slightly modified

[1] In German, Tauss.

form by the council and constituted the famed compacts, which continued to be, up to 1567, a fundamental law of the kingdom. The compacts declared that:—

I. The Holy Sacrament is to be given freely in both kinds to all Christians in Bohemia and Moravia and to those elsewhere who adhere to the faith of the two countries.

II. All mortal sins shall be punished and extirpated by those whose office it is to do so.

III. The word of God is to be freely and truthfully preached by the priests of the Lord and by worthy deacons.

IV. The priests in the time of the law of grace shall claim ownership of no worldly possessions.

The compacts are obviously founded on the articles of Prague, but they hardly satisfied the demands of even the most moderate utraquists. Some of the stipulations are very unclear. The one which limited the wealth of the clergy, always very reluctantly accepted by the church, was liable to be interpreted in various manners. Indirectly this question contributed considerably to the outbreak of the thirty years war.[1] It is doubtful whether the compacts would have generally been accepted by the Bohemians had it not been that a political reaction took place in the country about this time. The formerly powerful nobility of Bohemia had played but an insignificant part in the latter years of the Hussite wars. Many utraquist nobles therefore wished—if the freedom to retain the revered chalice was granted them—to act in union with the papal nobles and suppress the turbulent democracy of Tabor. Almost the entire nobility of Bohemia, both utraquist and Romanist, and a few of the more conservative towns formed a confederacy for this purpose, and their army decisively defeated the Taborite forces, led by Prokop the Great, at Lipany on May 30, 1434. A general pacification rapidly followed the defeat of the advanced party. At a meeting at

[1] See my *Bohemia, a Historical Sketch*, pp. 300-301.

Iglau the compacts were signed and accepted by both the Bohemians and the representatives of the council, and the Bohemians at last recognised Sigismund as their king. The estates had some time previously elected John of Rokycan as utraquist Archbishop of Prague. One of their conditions for accepting Sigismund as king was his promise to use his influence on the pope to obtain the recognition of Rokycan as archbishop. Treacherous as ever, Sigismund did not fulfil his promise, and indeed secretly opposed the recognition of the archbishop by the pope. John of Rokycan, however, continued to exercise his functions up to his death in 1471, and the fact that the papal opposition to him also continued was alone sufficient to render a true ecclesiastical pacification of Bohemia impossible.

Sigismund's reign in Bohemia was very short. Already sixty-eight years of age, he arrived at Prague for the first time as king in August 1436, and he died in December 1437. He was succeeded by his son-in-law, Albert Duke of Austria, of whom the chroniclers only tell us laconically that "he was a good man though a German." Albert only reigned about two years, and a very turbulent period followed his death. Albert's widow had indeed in February 1440 given birth to a son Ladislas, surnamed "Posthumus," but the government of the country was in dispute between two rival parties among the nobility. George of Podebrad acted as leader of the utraquist—or, as Palacky at this period calls it—the national party, while Ulrich of Rosenberg was the leader of the Romanist, or Austrian party. In 1448, Podebrad obtained the guardianship of Ladislas Posthumus.

Since the defeat of Tabor the utraquist church in Bohemia had adopted a very retrograde policy. It endeavoured in every way, except by means of absolute submission, to ingratiate itself with the Roman see. These attempts were invariably resultless. The Roman pontiff never recognised Rokycan as archbishop, and Pope Nicholas V. formally repudiated

the compacts. While the cringing policy of the utraquist church gained it no friends in Rome, it caused great discontent in Bohemia. Many Bohemians seriously contemplated a union with the Eastern Church, and these negotiations were only ended in consequence of the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks. Other opponents of the utraquist church favoured views not dissimilar to those formerly held by the men of Tabor. Thus arose the community of the Bohemian brethren which played so eminent a part during the last years of Bohemian independence. Its moral originator was Peter Chelcicky,[1] but the community was founded by a young monk named Brother Gregory, a nephew of Archbishop Rokycan, and Michael, parish priest of Zamberk.[2] They first established themselves at Kunwald, a small village near Zamberk.

During the short reign of Ladislas Posthumus, George of Podebrad continued to govern Bohemia, and after his death —he died in 1457, not yet eighteen years of age—Podebrad was elected king. His reign was, particularly in its earlier part, a time of great prosperity for Bohemia. Podebrad being, however, and always remaining a firm adherent of the utraquist church, he was confronted by the constant enmity of the Roman church. It was through the influence of Rome that Podebrad became in the last years of his life involved in a long and disastrous war with King Matthias of Hungary. In consequence of these wars, Podebrad, who had at one time thought of founding a national dynasty, was obliged to use his influence to assure the succession to the Bohemian throne to Prince Vladislav, son of Casimir, King of Poland. Though the Bohemian estates still considered the Bohemian throne an elective one, they without much opposition accepted Vladislav as king after the death of Podebrad in 1471. Vladislav was a firm adherent of the Church of Rome, but his influence on Bohemian affairs was very slight, as after his election as

[1] For Chelcicky, see my *History of Bohemian Literature*, pp. 153-171.
[2] In German, Senftenberg.

King of Hungary in 1490, he resided almost entirely in that country. Vladislav was succeeded by his son Louis, who had been crowned as King of Bohemia when but three years of age. He also succeeded his father as King of Hungary, and when defending that country against the Turks he was killed at the battle of Mohac, when but twenty years of age.

The estates of Bohemia, after prolonged negotiations, chose as successor to King Louis his brother-in-law Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria. Though two princes of the House of Habsburg had previously ruled for brief periods over Bohemia, Ferdinand's election marks the accession of the House of Habsburg to the Bohemian throne. Simultaneously with this foundation of a new dynasty, the almost extinct Romanist creed again began to gather strength. There is, of course, a close connection between the two events, for even at that time the unwritten but almost unbroken alliance between the House of Habsburg and the Roman see had long been in existence. Ferdinand, a prince of exceptional astuteness, to whose talent historians have never done sufficient justice, from the moment of his coronation endeavoured to strengthen the Roman cause in Bohemia. He endeavoured, though with little success, to gain for his side the more conservative Calixtines. Since the appearance of Lutheranism in the neighbouring German lands, these men had become somewhat isolated. The more advanced utraquists had adopted many of Luther's views, and the community of the Bohemian brethren were yet further from the old Calixtine teaching. Yet Ferdinand found little sympathy even among the Hussites nearest to the Church of Rome, and these attempts, which began soon after Ferdinand's accession in 1526, were afterwards discontinued. A foolish and unsuccessful attempt made by the Bohemian estates in 1547 to assist the German Protestants who were engaged in war with Ferdinand's brother Charles V., gave the king the desired occasion for acting with more vigour in Bohemia. The Bohemian towns were deprived of most of

their privileges. This undoubtedly proves how crafty was Ferdinand's policy. The Bohemian nobles had sometime previously established serfdom in Bohemia, thus rendering helpless the peasants who had supplied the Hussites with their best soldiers. Ferdinand's decrees now rendered the townsmen defenceless. As defenders of the nation and its church there remained only the knights and nobles, whom Ferdinand's grandson was afterwards to subdue. Pursuing his policy, Ferdinand in 1556 established the Jesuits in Bohemia, and in 1562 the Roman archbishopric of Prague was re-established after an interval of more than a century.

The re-establishment of the Roman church made little progress during the reign of Maximilian, who after Ferdinand's death in 1564 succeeded to the Bohemian throne. Maximilian's son, Rudolph II., the second who became King of Bohemia in 1576, also at first showed little interest in religious matters, and during the prolonged struggle between him and his brother Matthias both brothers made use of the religious divergences to further their own ambitious purposes. Rudolph in 1609 very reluctantly signed the "Letter of Majesty," which granted the Protestants—a name that at this period included Lutherans, members of the Bohemian brotherhood, and utraquists—considerable privileges. Rudolph, as the so-called "incursion of the men of Passau" proves, had determnied to free himself from this onerous obligation as soon as circumstances permitted it, and the same may be said of his brother Matthias, though he confirmed the letter of majesty when he succeeded his brother in 1612. Both Rudolph and Matthias being childless, Archduke Ferdinand of Styria, a grandson of Ferdinand I., became heir to the Bohemian throne, and under great pressure the majority of the Bohemian estates recognised him as such in 1617. Ferdinand, who had for some time ruled over Styria, had in that country relentlessly persecuted and driven from the land all who did not profess the Roman creed. He made

no secret of his intention of pursuing the same policy in Bohemia after his succession to the throne. The Bohemians had therefore either tacitly to accept their fate, as the Styrians had done, or to rise in arms before Ferdinand should have ascended the throne. It is beyond my purpose to describe this rising and the subsequent campaigns. At the battle of the Bila Hora—November 8, 1620—the religious freedom and for a time also the nationality of Bohemia perished. The Roman religion was forcibly re-established, and Hus's influence on the development of Bohemia ends here. Yet will the memory of Hus always be sacred to Bohemians. Though the conflicts of the present day turn on questions of politics and nationality, not of religion, the memory of Hus and of the Hussite wars has often strengthened and roused to new efforts those Bohemians who felt inclined to despair of the future of their country.

# APPENDIX

## A CONTEMPORARY BOHEMIAN ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF HUS

That indefatigable searcher of documents appertaining to ancient Bohemian history, Mr. Adolphus Patera, formerly head-librarian of the Bohemian museum, about the year 1888 discovered in the library of Prince Lobkowitz at Roudnice a contemporary Bohemian account of the death of Hus that was previously entirely unknown. I had intended merely to refer to this account briefly, while telling the story of the death of the master according to the well-known account of his disciple, Peter Mladenovic, which will never be superseded. I found, however, that such references retarded and impeded the narrative, and I have therefore translated for the benefit of those interested in the matter the Bohemian paper which Mr. Patera read at the general meeting of the Bohemian Society of Sciences on April 9, 1888. Mr. Patera stated: In a paper manuscript contained in the library of Prince Lobkowitz at Roudnice (vi. Fg. 60) which begins with the "Dispute of Intellect and Conscience on the worthy manner of receiving the Body of God," [1] I found among other matter also an "Account of the Trial and Burning of Master John Hus." In the present—nineteenth—century some one wrote on the cover: "The following little work is known under the name of Peter Mladenovic's *Life of John Hus*, and J. Jungmann [2] in his *History of Bohemian Literature*, 1849, p. 71, n. 159, maintains that this notice is derived mainly from the writings of Hus about himself." Both these conjectures are, however, not founded on truth. We also can give no credit to the view that the writer was an eye-witness of the events which he describes, though he himself affirms this, writing of himself, "I have briefly noted down everything concerning the events that befell in the Suabian country and its capital called Constance, for

[1] An ancient Bohemian religious pamphlet.

[2] Joseph Jungmann (b. 1773—1847) author of a large work on Bohemian literature. (See my *History of Bohemian Literature*, pp 362-371.)

some have taken away and some added. But I have noted down all that I saw, and at which I was present." It appears more likely that he noted down what he heard among the people from the mouths of some persons. The manuscript of Roudnice preserves to us rather the tradition concerning the judgment and burning of Hus which was current in Bohemia in the fifteenth century, and which was written down by some admirer of Hus. The manuscript of Roudnice dates from about the second third[1] of the fifteenth century. In the same manuscript is preserved on page 100*b*-103*b* a short Bohemian catechism which differs slightly from the catechism printed by Palacky, *Documenta*,[2] *magistri Joannis Hus*, Prague, 1869, pp. 703-708, and which Dr. J. Müller translated into German in his work, *Die Deutschen Katechismen der bohmischen Bruder*, pp. 90-95 (*Monumenta Germaniae paedagogica*, vol. vi.).

The contents of the account are given with the greatest faithfulness in accordance with the original. The necessary interpunctuation has been added, and the prepositions and other particles have been separated from the following word. The account runs as follows:—

In the year since the birth of the son of God fourteen hundred and fifteen, I have briefly noted down the events that befell in the Suabian country and in its capital, which is called Constance, for some have taken away (*i.e.* omitted facts) and some (have) added. But I have noted down what I saw, and at which I was present. When the servitor of Venceslas, King of Bohemia[3] arrived, he wrote in the evening a letter to the famed and celebrated master Jakubek, surnamed "of Stribro."[4] Seeing this, Master John Kardinal[5] said: What dost thou write, master of the blood of God and of communion with the chalice? With difficulty will the Christianity of the present age accept this. Knowest thou not that we must stand to-morrow before the masters of all Christianity, who will greatly oppose, declaring us guilty because of this (*i.e.* the introduction of communion in the two kinds). On the next morning the legates, cardinals, the bishops of all Christianity, the King of Hungary as emperor of the (Roman) empire questioned him (Hus) saying: This assembly is very grateful to thee for coming to us; hadst thou failed to do so, much good would have been destroyed.

[1] That is to say, between 1433 and 1466.

[2] The well-known collection of documents, which has been frequently quoted in this work.

[3] Hus.

[4] Magister Jacobellus, the famed theologian.

[5] The great friend of Hus, and one of his companions on his last journey.

And Master John Hus answered saying: Often have I wished to see you in person and converse with you, but I had not such an opportunity (as now). I have appealed to you and sent my magisters (to represent me), Master John of Jesenic, Master Marcus and other magisters, but to them you did not grant a hearing before you. Rather did you oppose them with cries and insults, imprisonment and frowns, but I, commending myself to the Lord God, preached the word of God, wishing only that I could with my own hands lift up all men to heaven, were it but possible. The Bishop of Riga arose among the council, and spoke saying: Master John, this assembly convened by the Holy Ghost says: Wilt thou of thy own account do this (namely), not be sophistical, obey, and accept instruction? He answered and spoke saying: Give me the lowest of your assembly, I am ready to accept with thanks all that will be good. They answered saying: Fifty-two masters have insisted on this, that thou shalt declare thy preaching, councils, and confessions to be heretical, and teach the contrary. Master John Hus answered and said: That was fine teaching of this learned assembly. Did not that young weak girl St. Catherine [1] act thus, that she led fifty magisters to the Lord and I, poor and insufficient man, cannot even convince one. Then the Bishop of Lodi arose and spoke saying: If thou wilt not yield and obey, the spiritual arm will submit you to its discipline, place you in prison, and endeavour to mitigate your errors and heresy. Then they placed him with the barefooted monks under the Rhine where he was put in a prison-chamber which was so narrow that he could hardly stretch himself, and which had but a small window, so that he could obtain a small quantity [2] of water or wine, for in those countries there is no beer; and while in prison he wrote of his imprisonment to the faithful Bohemians who loved God, to the men of Prague, Zatec,[3] Loun, and also Plzen saying: Pray fervently for me to God begging him to grant me constancy, for I am not better than St. Peter who three times disowned the Lord Jesus. If I (also) disown (him) do not use me ill (blame me), dear Bohemians who are without blame before God and men. But if we are companions in affliction with Christ, we will also rejoice together with Christ. We (will not be) as murderers and robbers, who suffer for

[1] A reference to the well-known legend of St. Catherine. It is said that fifty pagan philosophers visited her to expound the erroneousness of Christianity, but that her eloquence was so great that she converted them all to the Christian creed.

[2] In the original " zajdlyk," a measure of liquor. The word, in German, " seidel," continued in use up to recent times.

[3] In German, Saaz.

their deeds, but we will with Christ suffer guiltlessly that we may obtain eternal life. For Solomon says that God behaves to men as a father to his little sons, punishing them, though he loves them, as a father loves his sons and wishes not to behold their perdition. Graciously hast Thou (Jesus) deigned to look down upon us, giving strange gifts, a narrow prison, an evil couch, vile food, cruel fetters, toothache, dysentery and fever, that, as the whole body sinned, offending its God, thus also the whole body should receive the punishment given it by God. Then came Master Stephen surnamed Palicz [1] the parish priest of Kourim, and said to him (Hus): Lend briefly thy ear to what I will say. Master John Hus answered and said: Say, dear brother, something good to comfort me." Master Stephen answered and said: I wonder at that which I have read according to Scripture; since the day of the birth of the son of God, there has not been so hardened a heretic as thou art. Master John Hus answered and said: May God not account this to thee as a sin, for thou hast preached the gospel from the same pulpit as I, and thou hast preached the true faith. But already at the time of my judgment hast thou declared me to be a heretic, may God forgive thee thy sins. Then came the Bohemian nobles, knights of the Hungarian king, Lord Venceslas of Duba, otherwise of Lestno, and Lord John of Chlum, and they spoke saying: Listen but for a short time to that which we will say to thee. We are laymen and know not scripture (sufficiently) that we could counsel thee in accordance with it; but according to common sense we counsel thee: if thou art guilty of these errors and heresies, recant them and save thy life. But if thou art not guilty—and that thy conscience knoweth well—then entrust thyself in great confidence to God. Then Master John Hus answering said: I would not stand before God with even the slightest stain on my conscience. You have given me better advice than could a master, who had studied in the schools.

In the month of June, in the octave of St. Peter and Paul,[2] they at last decided to deprive him of his life, if he did not yield. In the church of St. Paul, the principal one of that city, they placed in a spot in the middle of the church which was surrounded by planks some chairs and a table on which were laid his vestments, that he might be despoiled of the dignity of priesthood. Then the Hungarian king, having on his head the golden imperial crown, sat down on his splendid throne between two princes; Prince Hanus,

[1] Stephen Palec, the famous—or rather infamous—informer.

[2] Old style. The martyrdom of Hus took place on the 6th of July new style.

the younger [1] sat at his right holding in his hand the golden apple with a cross as emblem of his dignity. Another prince was at his left holding aloft a bare sword. When they led Master John Hus out of prison, he was so weak that his bones clang to his skin, because of the many illnesses from which he had suffered in prison. Master John Hus bowed down before the body of God (on the altar) and prayed, but to the people he only showed his respect by (bowing) his head. For it is written thus: Before God humble your heart, but before the great and the prince bend your head; and he (Hus) stood before them, folding his hands, and from his right foot the fetters had not yet been struck off. One of the assembly arose and spoke saying: This assembly which has met by order of the Holy Ghost bids thee to allow thyself to be instructed. Master John answered: I still beg for instruction, but up to the present time I have received none. I am ready to die for that which I have preached in accordance with the holy prophets, the holy scriptures, the words of the holy apostles, the fathers of the church and the holy martyrs, for better doctrine have I none. Oh, you have summoned me (before your tribunal) and oppress me unrighteously with your might; but I summon you all in a century before the Lord God. Then immediately the Cardinal of Cambray sprang up and said: John Hus, obdurate heretic, this will not avail thee: thou wilt not escape from our hands. Master John Hus answered and spoke: It is indeed a fine holy council; three hundred harlots have followed it (come with it). Your earthly God you once called John the Pope, Balthasar XXIII., saying that he was an earthly God (God upon earth) and could not sin. But when by divine permission the secular power seized him you confessed that he was an evil sinner and simonist, the worst of heretics, and you hold him in the Castle of Gottlieben; and what this council did in summer, that will be known when winter comes; they will fly away like storks, and their enactments will be vain. He then looked at the King of Hungary, and spoke saying: King, that for which thou strivest thou shalt not obtain, for through thy miserable artifices thou shalt lose thy life; that for which thou strivest thou shalt not obtain. Thou wilt be neither Roman Emperor nor King in Bohemia.[2] Hearing this the Hungarian king blushed with shame and hung down his head; then they immediately read out

[1] The person thus described is Louis Count Palatine, who carried the imperial globe here designated as the "golden apple."

[2] These (false) predictions, here wrongly attributed to Hus, seem to point to the early date of the manuscript. Though he always claimed the Bohemian throne, Sigismund was only recognised as King of Bohemia in 1436.

some articles against him (Hus) according to the deposition of some witnesses mentioned above or mentioned afterwards, and they said: For this we have (as witnesses) two canons of the Vysehrad, two of the castle (Hradcany), two masters of the University of Prague, two aldermen of the old town, that thou didst say in one of thy sermons that the mother of God is like any other woman. And bursting into tears and protesting, he said: Far be this from me, miserable and weak man. Of the Virgin Mary I believe and hold that from the beginning she was a pure virgin, that after the birth she remained a pure virgin and that she remained without any corruption of her body. I believe also that she was raised to heaven, and that she is the highest person in heaven and therefore above the angels, above the prophets, above the apostles, above the martyrs. After he had professed his faith about the mother of God, he immediately ended. Then they spoke saying: Obdurate heretic, deserving to be condemned, sentenced to death and sent to hell, thou hast said: When a priest consecrates the body of God, raises it to his head and lays it on the corporal[1] there does not remain only material bread, that is to say it in Latin, *panis materialis vel substantialis*. And bursting into tears and protesting he said: Far be this from me, miserable and weak man. This do I believe and hold, concerning the body of God, when an ordained priest according to regulations approaches the altar piously and says the words (of consecration), there immediately remains the whole body of Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, martyred on the cross and now sitting on the right hand of God Father, the Almighty, as long as the sacrament (the holy wafer), its whiteness and roundness, are at all visible. Concerning the third article the witnesses said: Hear, obdurate heretic, deserving to be condemned, thou hast said that thou art the fourth person of the Holy Trinity (*sic*). Protesting he said: Far be this from me, miserable and weak man, that I should think so unwisely. This do I believe and hold concerning the Holy Trinity. I declare—and for this I am ready to die—that the three names, the three persons are one, one power, that is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; these three are one without difference, and I by no means add a fourth to them. Then they brought a paper crown, yards in height, on which three devils were painted in black. Seeing it Master John Hus took it in his hands and placed it on his head. And he said: Oh, crucified Jesus, meek lamb, Thou hast received a crown of thorns, bloody and piercing to the brain on Thy sacred head, for the sake of me, sinful one, and I now take on me this soft and light crown for Thy truth and because

[1] The cloth used in churches for covering the elements of the Eucharist.

of my earthly sins that I may timely escape them. Then immediately they brought a chain and Master John Hus spoke saying: Oh, crucified Jesus, meek lamb, Thou wert by the bishops of the old law bound during a whole night, mocked and imprisoned. This light chain I gladly receive for Thy truth; then immediately the bishops spoke, saying: Wrongly hath this heretic enjoyed the dignity of priesthood, without permission of the Roman church hath he preached God's word, he hath dared to say mass. Therefore let his priestly dignity be destroyed, let his tonsure be shaved off as if he were a madman; others said, let it be cut out with knives! And he (Hus) smiling, spoke and said: Oh, how quickly the bishops of the old law agreed about the scoffing and mocking of my dear Lord, and ye cannot agree about me, miserable and weak man. Forgive them, oh God, for they know not what they do. Answering him the Cardinal of Cambray spoke saying: Sufficiently, Hus, hast thou screamed in the city of Prague, leading the common people to error and heresy, therefore wilt thou not be allowed to do so here. Then they immediately dress him in mass-vestments, place him for derision in their midst before the high altar, put a silver chalice with a paten in his hand and speak saying: Oh accursed Judas, who hast deserted the peaceful ranks of this holy assembly, and hast gone out to join the ranks of the Jews, we take to-day from thee the chalice in which thou hast offered up the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and thy soul with thy lord devils [1] we send to damnation. Answering them, Master John Hus said: And I hope that I will to-day drink of the chalice in the heavenly kingdom with the martyrs and the Lord Christ. You commend my soul to the devil, but I commend it to the Lord Christ. Then they took from him the mass-vestments, and placed him in their midst. Then immediately the Bishop of Lodi who was called (a) monk stood on a chair and preached a sermon on heresy, taking (for his text) the words of St. Paul in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, "because of unbelief they were broken off." The body of John Hus, the unbeliever (the bishop said) is worse than the body of Judas, for Judas, having betrayed the Lord Jesus, thus helped all men to salvation, but this man has committed a greater sin than Judas by contaminating the holy Roman church. Therefore hath the spiritual hand nothing more to do with him, and surrenders him to the temporal hand, that the temporal hand may purify his errors and heresies by the flames of death. Then they immediately begin to burn some little

[1] Probably an allusion to the three devils painted on the cap that had been placed on the head of Hus.

books, similar to his (books) and condemn them for heresy. Master John Hus answered and said: How could you condemn my Bohemian writings, and disparage them, as being heretical, as you had not read them! even had you wished it, you would have been unable to do so, for there were here (men of) many nations, Hungarians, Germans, Italians, Frenchmen, Englishmen, and (men of) other nations. Except John, Bishop of Litomysl, none could understand (the Bohemian writings); for he is a Bohemian. Then Master John Hus recited an offertory which is usually sung at mass saying: Arise, Lady Mother, queen of heaven, beg of your son good things for us; then as he had learnt German in prison he spoke to the common people saying: Thus do I believe and hold with regard to the intercession of the Virgin Mary. Then the common people began to whisper among themselves: "This man professes good things, he should not die, if he acted thus in Bohemia." Remarking this the King of Hungary with his instigators,[1] his (Hus's) bitterest enemies, spoke saying: Perhaps he will lead astray the common people by his fine speeches to (believe) his errors and heresies, and he ordered the beadles and constables to whip the common people away from him with whips and clubs. Meanwhile he (the king) himself rises with the executioners, bishops and prelates, and he orders Prince Hanus, Lord of Klem the younger[2] to rise and hand him (Hus) over to the executioner. Prince Hanus, Lord of Klem, the younger, gave the golden apple with the cross, the emblem of his dignity, to another prince and handed him (Hus) over to the executioner. Then while twelve bishops read holy prayers, Master John Hus professed the common faith (saying): Thus do I hold and believe concerning the common Christian faith; and they led him out by the gate (on the road to) the Gottlieben Castle, where the road runs close to the Rhine, and they drive a wooden stake deep into the earth. Seeing this, Master John knelt down and prayed saying: Lord God, deign, I beg you, to grant me your holy help while I end my life on this couch. The crown falls from his head, and he, seeing the three devils painted on it, smiles, saying: These will not harm me, for I fear not the powers of hell. Then one of the masters said: Always have heretics the habit of smiling, be their fate ever so evil. Place again, master, on his heretical body that crown, that he may die

[1] This refers to the Bishop of Litomysl, Michael de causis, Palec and the other Bohemian priests, opponents of church-reform, who were then at Constance.

[2] The author writes in German "her czu klem." Rupert, Count Palatine, was generally known by the sobriquet of Klem. The writer here describes his son Louis, whom he wrongly calls "Hanus,"—as "Klem the younger."

separated from the wholesome heart of the holy church. One standing near said: Let a confessor be given to this man. But he (Hus) said that he had already secretly confessed in prison and that it was therefore not necessary now. Then a priest on a fine horse and clad in red silk (said): It is not seemly to give to a heretic the sacrament of the holy church, let him die like a dog! Then he begged that his gaolers might be allowed to approach him. He thanked them and having blessed them he said: Your reward will be the Lord God in the hour of your death. Then the executioner bound him, standing, to the stake, with one chain round his head, another round the middle, and a third round his feet, and he surrounded his body with dry faggots of vine up to his chin. Then Prince Hanus, Lord of Klem the younger, and the Count of Puphaim (Pappenheim), the imperial marshal spoke, saying: Recant, and save your life, or let some small child recant for you. Answering, Master John Hus said: As my lips have since my childhood never intentionally lied, assuredly the mouth of another will not lie for me. They then waved their hands asunder (as a signal to the executioner) and went away, saying: Burn, master, thou art obdurate in thy heresy, it is sure that thou wilt not give way. When the executioner set fire (to the stake) a great flame with smoke arose. Master John Hus cried out to God with great confidence and said: Christ, son of the living God, have mercy on me, sinner. Then taking a hymn of the holy David in the psalter, he sang one psalm, saying: Lord God Almighty, according to thy great and manifold compassion, have mercy on me, sinner. Then he still moved his lips, saying the Lord's prayer, and remained in the flames for the time you would take to go from the town of Prague across the bridge to the other side [1] as far as the great church of the Virgin Mary; and then he gave up the ghost. Then the fire sank, the body was burnt down and only the stake remained standing. Then the Lord of Klem ordered three cart-loads of wood to be brought and the remains to be broken up into fragments, that the heretical Bohemians might not obtain possession of his bones and venerate them as relics. Then they threw his garments and the boots which he had worn in prison into the fire, roasted his heart on a pointed stake and turned everything, even his bones, into dust. Then they dig up the earth deeply [2] load (the remains) on carts and, as the Rhine was near, scatter them in the water saying: Swim, Hus, to thy God. Then assembling the beadles

[1] The Mala Strana ("small quarter") of the town of Prague, situated on the left bank of the river Vltava.

[2] To prevent the Bohemians carrying away morsels of earth as relics.

he (the Count Palatine), gave them orders with a loud voice (saying): He who shall mourn over this heretic, or follow him, or hold to him, to him shall the same be done or worse, and then they all went their way.

I have translated this curious document as literally as the rugged Bohemian of the original permitted. The document obviously dates from the time of the Hussite wars, and represents Hus as he appeared to the warriors of that period. The account of the martyrdom of the master is very similar to that of the eye-witness, Mladenovic. Greater stress is laid on the brutalities committed against Hus, and it is attempted—contrary to facts—to connect Hus very closely with the origins of utraquism. The writer was a Bohemian well acquainted with Prague—as is proved by his quaint allusion to the duration of the martyrdom of Hus. He had little knowledge of Germany, as is proved by various mistakes concerning German personalities.

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